

Youth Living in Residential Care: Implications for Leisure and Identity

Austin Oswald, BSc, CTRS

A thesis submitted for completion of requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Applied Health Sciences
(Leisure Studies)

Supervisor: Colleen Hood, PhD

Faculty of Applied Health Sciences, Brock University,
St. Catharines, Ontario

Austin Oswald © August, 2013

YOUTH LIVING IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the intersection of living in residential care, leisure engagement, and adolescent identity development. The investigation included the voices of six youth living in a residential care facility in southern Ontario. The data was collected through participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Moustakas' (1994) modification of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method was used to analyze the data. The findings determined that living in residential care is rife with dialectical tensions that impact leisure and identity. The youth shared poignant narratives of how living in residential care was a stigmatizing experience that left them feeling restricted and isolated. They also shared their struggles with finding autonomy in a secured facility and managing the violent discourses of their peers. This research contributes to a burgeoning body of literature that explores the experiences of youth living in out-of-home care. Implications for practice and future research are discussed.

Acknowledgements

I would like to begin by thanking my supervisor, Dr. Colleen Hood, for affording me the privilege of working with her. This has been an incredibly enlightening experience and I am grateful for your investment in me. Thank you for your countless words of support; for your guidance; and for imparting your knowledge. I am leaving this experience as a changed person and I will always remember the invaluable lessons you have taught me.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Dawn Trussell and Dr. Trent Newmeyer for their mentorship. Your dedication to my growth and development is greatly appreciated and you have inspired me in ways that are unimaginable. Thank you for fostering my growth and for pushing me to excel.

I would also like to thank my family and friends because this thesis would not have been possible without their support. Thank you for being an ear to bend, for grounding me during difficult times, and for your encouragement. You gave me the strength to persevere and the confidence to trust myself in this process.

Finally, I am very grateful for the youth who participated in this study. Your trust in this project gave me the courage to pursue this line of research. I have learned a lot in your company and am grateful that we were able to share this experience.

This thesis is dedicated to my mother who always believed in me. Thank you for teaching me about the value of education and importance of compassion. Your love and support was essential to me getting here and I would not be the person I am today if it were not for you.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction	1
Explaining Residential Care.....	2
The Leisure Experience	5
Explaining Identity.....	8
Significance of the Study	9
Purpose of the Study	10
Delimitations	11
Limitations	11
Chapter Two: Literature Review.....	13
Theoretical Framework	13
Conceptualizing Identity	15
Conceptualizing Leisure	32
Conceptualizing Residential Care	45
Precipitating Factors to Placement.....	48
The Residential Care Context	48
Outcomes of Residential Care.....	57
Chapter Three: Methods.....	62
Qualitative Research	62
Methods of Preparation	71
Methods of Data Collection	75
Methods of Data Analysis.....	82
Trustworthiness	84
Ethical Considerations	88
Chapter Four: Findings	91
Backdrop: A Portrait of the Home	91
Leah's Portrait.....	95
Brad's Portrait	117
Mitch's Portrait	136
Nathanael's Portrait.....	157
Shawn's Portrait	175
Trevor's Portrait	190
Universal Portrait	211
Chapter Five: Discussion	223
Restriction	224
Isolation.....	229
Lack of Autonomy	234
Violence	238
Stigmatization	240
Conclusion	243
Implications.....	246
Implications for Practice	246
Implications for Research	249
Austin's Portrait	252

YOUTH LIVING IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

Research Dilemmas.....	255
References	262
Appendix A: Invitation Letter	283
Appendix B: Information Sheet	284
Appendix C: Consent Form	287
Appendix D: Information Page	288
Appendix F: Interview Guide for Interview One	292

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1: Participant Description.....94

Figure 1: Identity Development in Residential Care.....222

Chapter One: Introduction

The reliance on institutes of child welfare is problematic for Western nations as evidenced by the continuous need for its services to support a large number of youth in Canada and the United States of America (Schumaker, Fallon, & Trocme, 2011; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2006). The issues associated with these services are largely due to the persistent need to combat severe cases of maltreatment. As such, child welfare acts in response to a larger system of injustices bestowed upon children and youth. In 2008, an estimated 235, 842 cases of child maltreatment were investigated in Canada by child welfare services, nearly double from what was reported in 1998 (National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, 2008). These statistics suggest that child maltreatment is a pressing and prevalent social issue impacting the Canadian society. Importantly, the Canadian child welfare system has adopted a least intrusive approach when intervening in cases of child maltreatment. As a result, only the most severe cases of child maltreatment warrant placement in out-of-home care.

Out-of-home care accounts for any placement that is outside of the child's immediate family (i.e., informal arrangements with relatives, foster care, or residential care). Gilbert (2011) states, "[out-of-home] placements usually refer to public agency transfers of children from the home and care of their parents to other living arrangements" (p. 535). Due to the least intrusive measure, very few investigated cases of child maltreatment result in out-of-home placements. Furthermore, placement in residential care is uniquely uncommon and is typically reserved as a last resort for children and youth who are severely maltreated (National Clearinghouse on Family Violence 2008; Kufeldt, Simard, Vachon, Baker, & Andrews, 2000). Despite adopting the least

disruptive approach when intervening in cases of child maltreatment, provincial statistics suggest that an average of 17,868 Ontario children and youth are placed in residential care each month (Service Ontario, 2013). More specifically, the Niagara region responds to over 3,500 reports of child maltreatment annually and it is estimated that 650 of these cases will be placed in residential care facilities (Sadowski, 2004). Residential care facilities have been scrutinized for their effectiveness and research programs like Kufeldt et al. (2000) have made a concerted effort to evaluate the efficacy of residential placements. There is a surplus of research that problematizes out-of-home care and research suggests that placement in these contexts may provoke further marginalization and poor health outcomes. Yet, in recent years multiple research programs have emerged that outline new standards for residential care service delivery. These new standards of care are intended to present youth living in out-of-home care with similar standards of living as youth living in typical family contexts (Kufeldt et al., 2000). Despite this, living in residential care may alter many aspects of an individual's life, in particular their leisure and identity. This investigation will explore the residential care context to better understand the intersection with leisure engagement and identity development.

Explaining Residential Care

Residential care facilities are one of the primary forms of out-of-home care for youth involved with child welfare (Anglin, 2011; Johansson, Anderson, & Hwang, 2007). Although residential care facilities are predominately used to support maltreated children and youth, placement in these facilities is typically reserved for individuals who have experienced extreme forms of maltreatment (National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, 2008) As such, of the 235, 842 investigated cases of maltreatment in Canada in 2008,

only 8% of these investigations led to placement in out-of-home care (National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, 2008). Out-of-home care is described by Johansson et al. (2007) as “care offered to youth and families with psychosocial problems” and serving “youth with extensive emotional and behavioral problems” (p. 26). Due to the extensive vulnerabilities of the youth living in these facilities, the province of Ontario has enacted many policies to safeguard their emotional and physical safety. As such, all residential care facilities are governed by the Child and Family Services Act and must receive accreditation by the Ministry based on the information outlined in the Child and Family Services Act (Service Ontario, 2013).

The overarching purpose of residential care is to emulate a family environment for youth unable to reside in typical family contexts (Anglin, 2011; Han & Choi, 2006). Focus is often directed toward maintaining continuity of care, respecting cultural and religious beliefs, and ensuring the safety of families and youth receiving these supports. The value of offering residential placements for youth in need emerged alongside the deinstitutionalization movement in the 1960s. Johansson and colleagues (2007) state “big institutions were seen as harmful for children and young people and were replaced with smaller living units” (p. 26). As such, it is proposed that these smaller living units are more conducive to establishing greater rapport, emulating family living, avoiding institutionalization, and operating cost-effectively (Finkelstein, 1991; Garfat & Fulcher, 2008).

Residential care facilities engender many benefits for youth in need. The primary benefits are securing their basic human needs and removing them from harm. These facilities provide a secure source of shelter, food, and water and connect youth with

positive adult figures (Finkelstein, 1991; Garfat & Fulcher, 2008). Conversely, Johansson et al. (2007) problematize residential care by characterizing it as having inconsistent peers and adult figures that result in fleeting interactions and disrupted attachments. This is reflected in their statement “in residential care, the living environment is more like an institution than a home. The care workers work according to a schedule and none of them actually live on the premises” (p. 27). The inconsistencies defined by Johansson et al. (2007) may disrupt typical family roles and identities and consequently thwart youth outcomes (Trout, Chmelka, Thompson, Epstein, Tyler, & Pick, 2010).

The relational disruption implicit to the residential care experience may presuppose disruption in other living spaces. Swift and Callahan (2009) support this notion by profiling youth in residential care at greater risk of being excluded from meaningful experiences in school, family, and work. Therefore, it is suggested that the residential care context may impinge on meaningful engagement in different social domains. James, Montgomery, Leslie, and Zhang (2009) indicate that the vulnerabilities of youth living in out-of-home care (i.e., maltreatment, family instability, and poor academic functioning) are amplified by the absence of protective factors (i.e., positive family interaction, academic achievement, and physical safety). Thus, it is postulated that the absence of protective factors and presence of risks factors may have significant implications regarding meaningful engagement in diverse social contexts. Importantly, leisure is not immune from this and youth living in a residential care context may experience similar degrees of exclusion from meaningful leisure experiences.

The Leisure Experience

Leisure is a complex phenomenon that is difficult to discern and define (Kelly, 1983). Traditionally, leisure has been defined as activity, time, and state-of-mind. These three conceptualizations have formed the foundation for current understandings of leisure and they will be used to frame how leisure is defined in this chapter.

Leisure as time. The leisure as time definition emerged to juxtapose leisure with work (Brightbill, 1960). As a result, the definition frames leisure within the context of free time. The leisure time definition assumes that leisure is residual to production and self-maintenance as it is characterized by the time left over from mandated activities. Thus, from this perspective, leisure occurs during times that are devoid of economic productivity and self-maintenance. The leisure time definition is best conceptualized by Brightbill (1960) who states,

Leisure, then, is a block of unoccupied time, spare time, or free time when we are free to rest or do what we choose. Leisure is time beyond that which is required for *existence*, the things which we must do, biologically, to stay alive [...] and *subsistence*, the things we must do to make a living as in work, or preparation to make a living as in school. (p. 4)

Thus, leisure is a form of discretionary time governed by the implicit qualities of the activity. Therefore, from Brightbill's (1960) perspective, leisure is nonobligatory; it is self-selected and occurs within the free time context. However, scholars have problematized defining leisure as absolute freedom (Neulinger, 1981). The complexities of defining leisure by freedom are most transparent in gendered leisure as research highlights the interplay of gender ideologies and leisure engagement. Leisure may be

blended with duty and responsibility and it may be purposefully selected or occur within a context of obligation (Neulinger, 1981; Shaw & Dawson, 2001). Thus, not all leisure is alike and leisure cannot be bound within a single time or context. The inconclusiveness of the leisure and free time definition suggests that the leisure experience cannot be coupled exclusively with free time.

Leisure as activity. The activity definition of leisure infers that leisure is best defined by a myriad of activities. Dumazider (1974) describes leisure as activities that are liberating, enjoyable, self-actualizing, and non-productive. Implicit in these activities is the cultivation and expression of personal character. Dumazider (1974) proposes that leisure activities are typically performed for their intrinsic qualities and cease to involve external pressures or coercion. As a result, any activity that is intrinsically chosen and enjoyable may constitute a leisure experience. Therefore, this definition suggests that leisure is best defined by the activities we pursue.

The time and activity definitions provide an objective measure of leisure; however, the objective view of leisure does not capture the complexities of the leisure experience. Leisure may also be considered as a subjective experience, or a state of mind.

Leisure as state of mind. Leisure experiences are multifaceted and multivariate and the state of mind definition captures the nuances associated with leisure. Leisure as a state of mind suggests that leisure is best defined by the subjective interpretations of the experience (Neulinger, 1981). It is proposed that leisure varies inter-individually as it is informed by the intrapersonal responses to the experience. Leisure, then, is best defined by an attitude that is emergent in the leisure experience (Pieper, 1963). This suggests that leisure is more than discretionary time and activity as leisure is also a psychological

perception or attitude (Neulinger, 1981; Pieper, 1963). As a result, leisure can transcend a variety of non-conventional contexts including mandated roles as long as the participant perceives it to be a leisure experience.

It is clear that leisure occupies a variety of disparate meanings as evidenced by the varying definitions. This study is particularly interested in the subjective experience, or attitude, people experience while at leisure. As such, the subjective experience will be used as the primary way to understand leisure within this investigation.

Leisure and adolescence. The relationship between leisure and adolescence is robust and evidenced by the large amount of free time ascribed to this developmental period (Kleiber, Larson, & Csikszentmihalyi, 1986). Larson and Seepersad (2003) confirm this by stating, “free time accounts for nearly half of U.S. adolescents’ waking hours” (p. 54). Furthermore, they suggest that the lack of commitment attributed to this developmental period (i.e., family and work) plays an important role in affording youth with a privileged leisure state. Although adolescence is denoted by ample time for leisure, youth living in a residential care context may experience leisure differently than their counterparts living in typical family contexts. Youth living in residential care may experience a surplus of discretionary time or their time may be overly programmed and controlled. Furthermore, they may or may not have the necessary means to engage meaningfully in activities outside of the residential care context. Little is understood about the leisure experiences of youth living in out-of-home care and this study seeks to shed new light on this knowledge gap.

Explaining Identity

One of the primary developmental functions of adolescence, as outlined by Erikson (1968), is to secure a sense of identity. Based on this ideology it is proposed that identity development takes primacy over other developmental tasks during adolescence. Identity has been defined psychologically as “an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history” (Marcia, 1980, p. 158). However, it has also been defined socially and culturally as Gilroy (1997) states, “identity provides a way of understanding the interplay between our subjective experience of the world and the cultural and historical settings in which that fragile subjectivity is formed” (p. 301). Neither definition alone is comprehensive enough to understand the complexities of identity. As a result, this study will employ a psychosocial lens to explore adolescent identity development.

Identity can be understood as an individual’s theory of self (Erikson, 1968) that changes and evolves with the social world (Kroger, 2000; Marcia, 1980). Kelly (1983) ascertains that identity work is based on interaction and is often bound by social and historical contexts. Typically, the developmental process follows a pattern where individuals preform their ideal or ought identities to an audience (Abram & Hogg, 2004). These self-projections are received by the audience and responded to before the individual begins to adopt them as facets of their identity. Importantly, leisure may provide an ideal context for individuals to test and preform certain identities.

Leisure and identity. The leisure experience has been defined as an integral component of identity development. Leisure is described as a social and personal experience where individuals can explore different roles, selves, and identities (Kelly,

1983; Kivel, 1998; Kleiber, 1999). Furthermore, the leisure context provides a space that is rife with opportunities to push boundaries, experiment with new identities, and challenge existing identities in a relatively inconsequential manner (Kelly, 1983; Kivel, 1998; Roberts, 2011). The inconsequentiality of leisure is explained in Robert's (2011) work that suggests that the global implications of an individual's leisure engagements are rather minimal. As a result, the likelihood of an individual's leisure interrupting the wellbeing of the masses is unlikely. However, only viewing leisure as inconsequential would be a conceptual fallacy. The leisure experience may be extremely consequential in terms of an individual's growth and it may significantly influence identity development. Furthermore, shared leisure engagements may contribute to social change (Glover, 2004; Sharpe, 2008) and resist to dominant cultural practice (Shaw, 2001). As such, leisure experiences may have the influential capacity to change and revamp social structures and social roles.

Leisure is versatile and this makes it an ideal context to develop identities (Kelly, 1983; Kleiber, 1999). People may select to express themselves in diverse leisure contexts and use leisure as a means to experiment with identities rather inconsequentially. On the other hand, people may select leisure activities that affirming existing labels and socially prescribed identities.

Significance of the Study

The intersection of leisure and identity is not a novel concept for leisure studies. Research has taken significant interest in the role and function of leisure in human development, particularly identity development (Kelly, 1983; Kleiber, 1999). The subject has been approached from a variety of perspectives examining a variety of populations.

Leisure and identity has been explored in relation to youth sexual identity (Kivel & Kleiber, 2000), family identity (Hornberger, Zabriskie, & Freeman, 2010), and gender identity (Jun & Kyle, 2012; Shaw, Kleiber, & Caldwell, 1995). The results of these investigations suggest that different demographics ascribe different motivations and meanings to their leisure and identity work. Despite the extensive literature surrounding this area of research, youth living in a residential care context have been a largely overlooked population. Thus, it is postulated that youth living in residential care may also ascribe different motivations and meanings to leisure and identity development.

Furthermore, Shaw (2000) reports that leisure research must address pressing social issues that cross academic disciplines to increase the relevance of leisure studies. This investigation seeks to attend to Shaw's (2000) proposal by addressing child maltreatment as the social issue to frame the study. In particular, only extreme cases of child maltreatment, which merit placement in residential care, will be explored in this investigation. The severity of child maltreatment is evidenced in the literature that highlights its contribution to a myriad of risks that impact development. Youth who have experienced trauma and maltreatment are at a greater likelihood of experiencing unemployment, low socio-economic status, social exclusion, mental illness, academic difficulties, and addiction in later life (Gallagher & Green, 2012; Norman, Byambaa, De, Scott, Vos, 2012; Trout et al. 2010). Thus, it is clear that child maltreatment lends itself to an array of social ills that impact both society and the individual.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative investigation is guided by the question "What is the intersection of living in residential care, leisure engagement, and adolescent identity development?"

The study explored the lived experiences of a group of youth living in a residential care facility from a leisure lens. This study was specifically interested in the descriptions, feelings, interactions, perspectives, and experiences of youth as it relates to residential care, leisure engagement, and identity development.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to one particular residential care context. Thus, the outcomes of the study will be specific to the experiences of youth residing in the specific facility under investigation. As such, it is expected that the experiences of the youth will offer a degree of consistency and reflect the specific culture of the residential care facility. As a result, it is anticipated that the youth may cluster toward a similar age and encounter similar past experiences prior to placement in the facility. Furthermore, this study was delimited by the research questions used to frame the investigation. As a result, only information pertinent to the intersection of residential care, leisure engagement, and identity development was addressed in this study.

Limitations

In order to gain a detailed understanding of the experiences of youth living in residential care a qualitative method framed the investigation. As a result, it is expected that the results of the study will not be generalizable or causal because neither is anticipated nor intended in qualitative research. The lack of generalizability will be mediated by achieving rich and thick descriptions of the experiences of the youth. Therefore, the results are described in a manner that allows the findings to be transferable to similar residential care contexts. Despite contextualizing the phenomenon through

thick descriptions, there is still a risk that the responses will cluster and represent the unique culture of the facility under investigation.

Furthermore, a possible power imbalance may exist between myself and the participants and this may compromise data collection. As such, the youth may feel threatened by my position of power and may decide to withhold disclosing certain information. I anticipate that my presence on site may mediate the potential power imbalance by providing opportunities to establish rapport with the youth.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The premise of this chapter is to provide a thorough review of the related and relevant literature pertaining to this investigation. Expanding on chapter one, three central constructs (identity development, leisure engagement, and residential care) will be described and used to frame the chapter.

Theoretical Framework

Self-Categorization Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) provided a conceptual framework to understand identity. Turner and Reynolds (2004) posit that fundamental to Self-Categorization Theory (SCT) is recognizing that “intergroup relations cannot be reduced to individual psychology but emerge from an interaction between psychology and society” (p. 259). Thus, the theory provides a blending of the psychological and sociological understandings of identity.

SCT suggests that humans are innately driven to categorize each other and that the categorization process informs identity development. Gilroy (1997) asserts that fundamental to understanding identity is to understand the relationship between perceived sameness and difference of individuals and groups. He advocates for a conceptual shift away from understanding identity as “I” and “me” to considering identity through a lens of “we” and “us”. This suggests that implicit to identity development is “othering” where individuals and groups come to understand themselves through the differences in others. SCT reflects Gilroy’s (1997) idea of emphasizing “us” versus “them” by highlighting the relative importance of categories within social systems. Hogg (2004) agrees with the centrality of “othering” in identity development by stating, “categorization accentuates perceived differences between categories and similarities within categories” (p. 206).

This suggests that a principal component of identity development is exploring the differences and similarities between individuals and groups.

Beyond this, SCT proposes that identities are context dependent and bound within a social and historical milieu. Additionally, the theory places particular emphasis on discerning the in-group, defined as “collections of individuals who share at least one attribute in common” (Turner & Reynolds, 2004, p. 263), from the out-group. As such, identity comparisons serve an important role in informing our understandings of who we are in contrast with who we are not (i.e., youth in care versus youth not in care). Importantly, the theory is not exclusive to comparisons between groups as it acknowledges that comparison and discrimination inevitably occur within groups. As such, in-group comparisons allow members to become uniquely individual by highlighting the differences among the members within their respective groups (Turner et al., 1987; Turner & Reynolds, 2004)

The theory recognizes that individuals may align with multiple in-groups and that membership in multiple groups may result in the plurality of self and identity (Hornsey, 2008; Turner & Reynolds, 2004). Importantly, an individual who is aligned with multiple in-groups may reap the benefits of having a bounty of identities and connections. However, being a member of multiple groups may also dilute their identities and connections.

SCT posits that identities are not only a function of sociology as it acknowledges the psychology of identity development. The theory recognizes that individuals may derive meanings from the groups in which they belong and internalize these meanings to inform their developing identities. Turner and Reynolds (2004) address this by stating

that individuals “perceive, define, and make sense of the world and themselves” (p. 262). It is believed that individuals extrapolate meanings from their daily experiences, synthesize these meanings and internalize them to inform their developing identities (Hogg, 2004; Turner & Reynolds, 2004). Lastly, the theory takes into account the important role that individual traits, beliefs, and personalities play in an individual’s identity.

Conceptualizing Identity

Identities are dynamic, complex, and evolving. The term is also used synonymously with an individual’s theory of self and self-concept (Erikson, 1968; Kleiber, 1999; Marcia, 1980). Research suggests that identity development is a psychosocial experience that involves all levels of cognitive and social functioning (Erikson, 1968; Gilroy, 1997; Marcia, 1980; Smith & Sparks, 2008). Identity development can be described as a commitment to a particular set of beliefs about oneself and society that comes to fruition after extensive self-exploration (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980). Although many scholars agree that identity development involves a degree of commitment to a set of beliefs about self this does not suggest that all identities are static. Identities and identity expressions may vary in context and may be influenced by significant events across the life course (Abrams & Hogg, 2004). As a result, identities are dynamic, intimately connected with the human experience, and evolve with the individual and his or her social and historical milieu (Abrams & Hogg, 2004; Hornsey, 2008; Kleiber, 1999; Marcia, 1980; Turner & Reynolds, 2004).

Erikson’s identity theory. Fundamental to contemporary understandings of identity is Erikson’s (1968) psychosocial theory. Erikson (1968) posits that human

development is composed of eight sequential stages of development and that each stage is comprised of a unique developmental crisis. He describes the developmental crisis as a zero-sum relationship resulting in either successful or unsuccessful human development. This study is particularly interested in the fifth psychosocial stage: adolescent's identity versus role confusion. In more recent times Erikson's identity theory has been expanded, challenged, and modified. The following section will use Erikson's (1968) identity theory as a foundational piece to explore identity. Moreover, Erikson's (1968) work will be compared and contrasted with contemporary understandings of identity to paint a fuller picture of identity development.

Erikson's (1968) seminal work on identity has provided a strong foundation for contemporary understandings of identity development. Erikson (1968) postulates that identities are acquired after the successful completion of a series of previous developmental tasks. He addresses identity dialectically, characterizing it as negotiations between two identity types: the personal identity (i.e., inherently individual) and ego identity (i.e. inherently social). As such, the process involved with identity development is complex, subjective, and diverse as no two identities are acquired in the same manner. Erikson (1968) proposes that,

Identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning, by which the individual judges himself in the light of what he perceives to be the way in which others judge him in comparison to themselves and to a typology significant to them; while he judges their way of judging him in the light of how he perceives himself in comparison to them and to types that have become relevant to him. (pp. 22-23)

This captures the interactive and highly cognitive component of identity development.

Erikson's (1968) emphasis on the relative cognitive nature of identity is highlighted by his focus on cultivating identity through reflection, judgment, and internalization.

Furthermore, Erikson (1968) suggests that identity development is guided by seeking congruence of qualities and behaviours with one's values, personal history, and interests.

Many scholars have expanded upon Erikson's (1968) work and suggest that overemphasizing the cognitive may miss highly relevant social factors involved with identity development (Abrams & Hogg, 2004; Hornsey, 2008; Snyder, 2012; Turner & Reynolds, 2004). Thus, identity cannot be divorced from the social context in which it is bound. Abrams and Hogg (2004) posit that identities are context dependent and bound within social and historical meaning systems. They assert that individuals may change their persona to reflect the interests, norms, and desires of the immediate audience. Hogg (2004) states that individuals may perform their identities in a fashion that mirrors the immediate social context. He reports, "people may also want to communicate their group membership to fellow members by publicly exhibiting behavior that confirms membership" (p. 211). Thus, an individual's present and prevalent social world may significantly influence the way in which they express their identities in public spaces.

Pivotal to Erikson's (1968) psychosocial theory is a crisis described as a process of negotiation. Erikson (1968) defines the crisis as "a necessary turning point, a critical moment, when development must move one way or another" (p. 16). He addresses identity antithetically as identity versus role confusion. Identity is the successful outcome of identity work and is denoted by a commitment to an identity that is congruent with one's abilities, beliefs, and history. Role confusion, however, is described as a lack of

meaningful identity exploration and commitment. Erikson's (1968) successive development stages imply that successful identity development is dependent on the successful resolution of prior developmental crises (i.e., autonomy versus shame and doubt; industry versus inferiority) and is precursory for later developmental crises (i.e., intimacy versus isolation; generativity versus stagnation). Thus, it can be anticipated that individuals who experience significant disruption in early developmental periods (i.e., childhood maltreatment) may be at a disadvantage when engaging in meaningful identity work. Dichotomizing identity as either identity or role confusion may be a conceptual fallacy because it assumes that individuals need to meet certain developmental outcomes before identity work can begin. Furthermore, the dichotomy suggests that identities are relatively static and single faceted and this may not capture all of the complexities associated with an individual's identity.

Marcia's identity status theory. Marcia (1980) expands on the work of Erikson (1968) by problematizing the dichotomy of identity versus role confusion. Marcia (1980) complexifies identity by suggesting that it encompasses four identity statuses labeled as Identity Achievement, Foreclosure, Identity Diffusion, and Moratorium. Similar to Erikson (1968), Marcia's (1980) identity statuses are differentiated by degrees of exploration and commitment. The exploration-commitment relationship proposes that identity development involves differing degrees of identity exploration and commitment, which leads to varying identity outcomes.

Identity Achievement is described as the optimal identity status as it is delineated by identity commitment that is based on extensive self-exploration. Marcia (1980) asserts that achieved identities typically results in positive outcomes and describes identity-

achieved individuals “as strong, self-directed, and highly adaptive” (p. 111). Identity commitment is facilitated through autonomous decision-making as identity-achieved individuals engage in a process of self-directed and personally meaningful identity exploration (Klimstra, Hale, Raaijmakers, Branje, & Meeus, 2010; Marcia, 1980).

Although identity achievement is important for adolescent development it may be problematic for youth residing in residential care. Youth in residential care experience a greater risk of social exclusion when compared to the general population (Han & Choi, 2006; Finkelstein, 1991; Rauktis, Fusco, Cahalane, Bennett, & Rienhart, 2011; Trout et al., 2010). This may result in forced membership within an identity group (e.g., youth in care) and this may stifle their ability for meaningful identity exploration. Additionally, the extensive disruption in the lives of youth living in residential care may disrupt their ability to form longstanding identity commitments. Conversely, this disruption may also provide the youth with multiple contexts for self-exploration and persuade them to look inward and develop a greater sense of self.

Foreclosure involves limited exploration paired with high commitment. Typically, foreclosed individuals have come to commit to a particular set of beliefs without taking the necessary time for meaningful self-exploration. As such, identity foreclosure may be a result of relying heavily on others to facilitate identity work (e.g., peer or parental pressures). The relationship between foreclosed identity and residential care may be significant. The lack of privacy and forced membership as a youth in care may perpetuate shared norms and identity commitments (Finkelstein, 1991; Rauktis et al., 2011). Importantly, if youth living in residential care are unable to form long-lasting and meaningful associations with groups outside of the system they may be at risk of

experiencing identity foreclosure. The residential care context may constrain autonomy and autonomy is implicitly connected with identity development. Thus, living in residential care may impact identity development.

Identity Diffusion is described as being devoid of either identity exploration or commitment. Diffused individuals may be at risk of experiencing a state of psychological homelessness as they have yet to make any informed decision about their sense of self (Hardy & Laszoffy, 2007). Youth residing in residential care may experience a lack of opportunity for meaningful identity exploration due to their compromising life circumstances. These youth may be at risk of having a lack of consistent adult support to assist with navigating the identity development process and this might make them vulnerable to the diffused status.

Lastly, *Moratorium* is defined as a working identity and is characterized by a high level of identity exploration with no commitment. These individuals are preoccupied with exploring different identities and may or may not be in the process of committing to a particular identity (Klimstra et al., 2010; Marcia, 1980). The moratorium status is an exploratory stage and is often described positively in terms of preceding identity achievement. As mentioned, youth residing in residential care may experience heightened degrees of transiency and this may have implications for the developing identity. Thus, living in residential care may provide an optimal context for identity exploration and may encourage self-discovery by exposing youth to multiple contexts to explore their identities. However, the restrictiveness of residential care may also impinge on opportunities for meaningful self-exploration, which is necessary for the moratorium status.

The different identity statuses can be used to operationalize a trajectory of identity development. However, people are not subject to follow a globally prescribed course of identity formation as identity development is nonlinear and subjective (Marcia, 1980; Waterman, 1999). Waterman (1999) attributes identity work to progressive developmental shifts where an individual moves from a maladaptive identity status (e.g., Identity Diffusion) to an adaptive identity status (i.e., Identity Achievement).

Waterman's (1999) work on the progressive developmental shifts led Klimstra and colleagues (2010) to examine and modify Erikson's (1968) traditional pathway to identity (i.e., identity exploration and commitment). They suggest that the traditional identity pathway may not be comprehensive enough to conceptualize identity work and they advocate for the inclusion of reconsideration as a third component of identity work. As such, Klimstra and colleagues (2010) postulate that identities are formed through exploring alternative identity domains, committing to a particular identity, and reconsidering the commitment. Reconsideration, in this model, is described as a process of ongoing consideration of alternative identities. Furthermore, Klimstra et al. (2010) indicate that as social contexts change identities may also change. They state, "when the developmental context of an individual changes, it can be necessary to re-evaluate or even replace old commitments" (p. 152). This is consistent with sociological perspectives on identity as it suggests that people may transform their identities to match the social context.

Identity and adolescence. Erikson (1968) proposes that adolescence is the most critical life stage for identity development. Many scholars agree that adolescence engenders certain developmental characteristics necessary for identity work; however,

scholars (see Klimstra et al., 2009; Marcia, 1980; Meeus, 2011) have refuted the notion that identity begins and ends with adolescence.

Despite the inconclusiveness regarding the stability or change of adolescent identity development, adolescence is still considered an influential developmental stage for identity. It is proposed that young adults are afforded the cognitive capacity to critically examine, reflect, and synthesize qualities of the self (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980). Erikson (1968) indicates that the increase in cognitive ability during adolescence is necessary for identity development and that adolescence is a crucial time for cultivating identities. Furthermore, adolescence is characterized by an expanding social world where youth are provided with a breadth of opportunities for socialization (Cobb, 2010; Gillen, Guy, & Banim, 2004; Search Institute, 2012). Tanti, Stukas, Halloran, & Foddy (2011) state “group identity becomes a dominant theme in early-adolescence, as young people strive to achieve a sense of belonging within a valued social group” (p. 555). As such, it could be suggested that social comparisons are a prevalent component of adolescent identity development. Furthermore, the desire for affiliation and belongingness may suggest that Self-Categorization Theory fits well with adolescent development.

Marcia (1980) believes that identity begins at the inception of life and continues across the life course. He asserts that an individual’s history is a source of reflection and informs the process of future identity development. Marcia (1980) contends that adolescence is a vulnerable period for identity work. As such, it can be garnered that identity is a gradual and dynamic process and that adolescence is a development period that is predisposed to extensive identity work. Marcia (1980) states,

What is important about identity in adolescence, particularly late adolescence, is that this is the first time that physical development, cognitive skills, and social expectations coincide to enable young persons to sort through and synthesize their childhood identifications in order to construct a viable pathway towards their adulthood. (p. 110)

Although Marcia describes adolescence as a period when social, cognitive, and physical development coincide some scholars suggest otherwise. Nightingale and Wolverton (1993) report that adolescence is plagued by a state of rolelessness, which they describe as “[a lack of] contributing, active, productive roles that are consistent with and valued by adult society” (p.472). They propose that adolescence has been elongated by the lack of valued social roles and state, “adolescents have no prepared place in society that is appreciated or approved; nonetheless they must tackle two major tasks, usually on their own: identity formation and development of self-worth and self-efficacy” (p. 472). As a result, significantly excluded youth (i.e., those disconnected from family, school, work, or community) may be at risk of experiencing difficulties when cultivating their identities. Consequently, excluded youth may seek alternative means of identification in more inclusive life spaces, such as leisure, to compensate for the lack of inclusion in other life domains.

Social exclusion connects with Self-Categorization Theory as the theory posits that identities are cultivated based on two criteria, accessibility and fit (Hornsey, 2008; Turner et al., 1987). Thus, people are more likely to identify with groups that are accessible and fit with their values, beliefs, and life history. The lack of valued social roles during adolescence may significantly influence adolescent identity development as

young adults may be unable to access certain groups, roles, and identities. Therefore, young adults who are unable to access a breadth of social experiences may not be afforded with the appropriate spaces to develop meaningful identities. Many scholars agree that socially excluded youth are at particular risk of missing out on developmental outcomes and may seek refuge in accessible social spaces which are at times precarious (Caldwell & Smith, 2006; Hardy & Laszoffy, 2007; Mahoney, Sattin, & Magnusson, 2001; Nightingale & Wolverton, 1993; Robertson, 1999; Rutter, 1995).

Identity development: private and public self. Identity has been described dialectally as both an individual and social experience. Erikson (1968) classifies identity by two typologies described as personal identity and ego identity. He reports that personal identity is “the perception of selfsameness” (p. 50). As such, personal identity involves a process of determining one’s continuity over time and space. Moreover, he indicates that this continuity or selfsameness must also be recognized and respected by others in the immediate community. The ego identity, as indicated by Erikson (1968), involves a sense of relatedness and continuity with others in the immediate community. It is suggested that the ego identity requires one to identify with qualities that “coincides with the sameness and continuity of one’s *meaning for significant others* in the immediate community” (p. 50). As such, identity is both a private and public experience.

The private self (personal identity) and public self (ego identity) is intimately connected and interdependent. This is evidenced in Allport’s (1924) statement “there is no psychology of group which is not essentially and entirely a psychology of individuals” (p. 4). The context or social space is considered a driving force behind identity development and it is proposed that the public and private selves are intimately connected

(Abrams & Hogg, 2004; Allport, 1924; Turner et al., 1987; Turner & Reynolds, 2004).

Identity, then, involves both the individual and the group. It can be postulated that the interplay between these identities may have significant implications for developing a sense of self (Kleiber, 1999; Kelly, 1983; Zaff & Hair, 2003).

Erikson (1968) suggests that the personal identity and ego identity may embody similar and disparate qualities that may enhance or thwart the formation of a universal and coherent sense of self (Zaff & Hair, 2003). He postulates that individuals are motivated by the desire to achieve a cohesive and static identity across the life course. The importance that Erikson (1968) placed on identity congruence and consistency has been challenged by some research. As such, research has emphasized that identities also shift with the surrounding social context and that a fixed universal identity may be unlikely (Kroger, 2000; Turner et al., 1987; Turner & Reynolds, 2004). Furthermore, Abrams and Hogg (2004) assert that identity expression is highly dependent on social forces and cultural expectations. As such, they suggest that an individual may exhibit several identities that are reflective of the immediate social world.

Although both identities are addressed interdependently, a finite balance still exists between the public and private selves. Kleiber (1999) states, “while these two [identities] are not always incompatible, they do tend to be addressed dialectically; in other words, the overemphasis on one requires an adjustment in the other direction” (p. 140).

Private identity. Kleiber (1999) describes the private identity as “a product of internal consistencies and inconsistencies with one’s past, differences and similarities one has with others, and plans and goals for the future” (p. 95). Based on this definition it is

suggested that the private self is highly individualized and self-defined. Typically, the private identity is achieved through reflecting on one's life history in relation to one's anticipated life path (Erikson, 1968; Kleiber, 1999). Kroger (2000) believes that the private identity involves a process of differentiating from others, a stage in human development when a person becomes uniquely individual. The process is often characterized by defining individual beliefs, interests, values, needs, and attributions (Kroger, 2000).

Marcia (1980) asserts that the private self comes to fruition during adolescence. He believes that adolescence is the first life stage of human development when individuals are afforded the capacity to synthesize and integrate elements of one's past with one's future directions. As a result, the private identity may be expressed in a manner to represent one's past and future goals, values, and beliefs. The implicit individuality and uniqueness of the private identity presupposes that it is seminal to achieving a state of individuation, which Kleiber (1999) defines as the "process of becoming more uniquely individual" (p. 141). Individuation is described as a fundamental component of identity work and rite of passage for adolescence. It is suggested that individuation provides the separation and detachment from others that is necessary to develop into an autonomous adult (Erikson, 1968; Koepke & Denissen, 2012).

Trafimow, Triandis, and Goto (2001) make reference to a private self and report that the private self is individualistic, self-defined, and descriptive. As such, they propose that the private identity primarily encompasses an individual's traits and behaviours. Trafimow and colleagues (2001) contrast the private self with collective and public self

and assert that the private self is differentiated from the collective and public as it is highly individualized and socially detached. Although the private self is characterized by individuality this is not to suggest that it is uninfluenced by the social world. The social context may indirectly influence the private self in terms of understanding unique interests and differences with others (Abrams & Hogg, 2004; Gilroy, 1997; Kleiber, 1999; Kroger, 2000).

Public identity. Despite being fundamentally different from the private identity (i.e., social rather than solitary), public identity may complement and inform the developing private self (Abrams & Hogg, 2004; Kleiber, 1999; Kroger, 2000). Public identity is distinguishable from the private by serving the purpose of relatedness rather than individuation. Thus, where private identity seeks intra-individual understanding, public identity seeks inter-individual understanding (Kleiber, 1999; Zaff & Hair, 2003). As such, the public self is most concerned with group membership, affiliations, and interpersonal connections (Abrams & Hogg, 2004; Trafimow et al., 2001). Zaff and Hair (2003) suggest that public identity provides an avenue for people to feel a sense of belonging and relatedness within a social group. They indicate that public identity occurs when “the individual places himself or herself into a social group, feels a part of that group, and then compares himself or herself to others in that group, usually in a favorable light” (Zaff & Hair, 2003, p. 237). Although Zaff and Hair (2003) suggest that public identity develops out of self-governed placement in groups this is not always the case. It is important to acknowledge that group membership and affiliation may be forced or bestowed upon individuals (Hogg, 2004).

Forced membership in a fixed group (i.e., ethnicity, living in residential care, gender) may result in stronger group affiliations and identity salience (Gilroy, 1997; Hogg, 2004). Furthermore, being a fixed member of a group may cause individuals to inflate their differences from others, resulting in stronger group affiliations. Abrams and Hogg (2004) report that groups often evaluate themselves in contrast to other groups to establish a stronger sense of group cohesion. As such, in-groups actively strive to differentiate from out-groups through social comparisons. Hogg (2004) also asserts that in-groups may engage in similar social comparisons with one another. He suggests that members may evaluate one another in terms of the fundamental qualities of the group. This process often perpetuates in-group hegemony as it causes discrimination between members. Hogg (2004) reports that in-group comparisons often result in exposing members who do not reflect the valued qualities of the group, individuals whom he defines as peripheral members or deviants. As a result, public identity may yield positive outcomes such as solidarity and group cohesiveness (i.e., if self appraisals are similar in relation to the greater group) or isolation and conflict (i.e., if self appraisals are unlike the greater group).

Subpopulations and identity. Zaff and Hair (2003) profile subpopulations (i.e., youth living in residential care, ethnic and racial minorities) at risk of relying more on group identification during identity development. Abrams and Hogg (2004) agree by suggesting that minority groups may construct meaningful social categories pertaining to their minority status for the purpose of understanding one's self and others. As such, it can be postulated that minority groups may have different motivations and needs regarding identity work. Zaff and Hair (2003) indicate that identity work for

subpopulations is increasingly “based on the identification with a particular categorical group” (p. 238). Moreover, they suggest that “one’s thinking, perceptions, feelings, and behaviors” (p. 238) are engrained within the group and that this may influence identity development.

It is important to mention that strong affiliations with a social group may give rise to important issues of consideration in terms of identity. Abrams and Hogg (2004) report that highly enmeshed social groups may encourage homogeneity and group identity salience. Hogg (2004) believes that strong connections to a social group, without alternative connections, increase the risk of identifying primarily with one social group. Turner et al. (1987) propose that individuals with group identity salience behave in a manner that confirms their membership with the group, a process they term “depersonalization”. Hogg (2004) states, “depersonalization makes people in groups appear attitudinally, affectively, and behaviorally relatively homogenous” (p. 208) and this may significantly constrain individuation.

Although strong group affiliations may result in depersonalization, this can be buffered by being a part of multiple group memberships. Individuals may experience a multiplicity of self provided they are exposed to multiple social groups and this may mediate the effects of depersonalization. Abrams and Hogg (2004) ascertain that people may modify their identities to reflect the immediate audience, and that different contexts may provoke shifts in identity expressions. Therefore, it is clear that the public and private identity is complex, interrelated, and varied as no two identities are acquired in the same manner.

Factors that influence identity. Scholars have theorized that parents are primary agents of adolescent identity formation (Erikson, 1968; Grolnick, Deci, & Ryan, 1997; Marcia, 1980). Mullis, Garf, and Mullins (2009) state “healthy identity development of adolescents is more likely to occur in families in which adolescents feel connected to their parents and are able to express their individuality” (p. 327). Forthun, Montgomery, and Bell (2006) agree by indicating, “a secure attachment to one’s parents is positively related to the identity achieved status, negatively related to the identity foreclosed and diffused statuses, and positively related to identity exploration and commitment” (p. 143). Thus, it can be garnered that parents facilitate identity development by providing opportunities for youth to engage meaningfully with identity work and by modeling identity appropriate behaviours. Furthermore, Robertson (1999) reports that shared leisure experiences in the parent-child dyad may buffer against negative identity outcomes. She proposes that the relationship between adolescent risk taking is mediated by the nature of the parent youth relationship more so than the overall stability of the family unit. As such, it is postulated that youth who are connected with positive and enduring adult figures may be at an advantage for a healthy identity development when compared with youth faced with detached and transient adult relationships.

Furthermore, family interactions have been sourced as providing multiple influential figures of identity formation. Wong, Branje, VanderValk, Hawk, and Meeus (2010) suggest that sibling dyads yield the discretionary power to influence one another’s identities. They report that enduring interactions between siblings may provide a sense of continuity and merit a context for meaningful identity work. Conversely, family interaction may provide a context that thwarts identity formation. Soenens, Berzonsky,

Dunkel, and Papini (2011) indicate that family interaction may compromise adolescent identity development if the family is autonomy-suppressing. Soenens and colleagues (2011) define these families as enmeshed families where “members do not have the privacy to explore on their own” concluding that they are a “type of family climate that would hinder adolescents from achieving an adequate level of individuation” (p. 205). As a result, the family unit is complex and may positively or negatively affect healthy adolescent identity development.

Another frequently sourced contributor to adolescent identity development is peer interactions. Nightingale and Wolverton (1993) suggest that youth may be more inclined to interact with peers than family as opposed to generations prior; they report, “half of adolescents’ waking hours [are] spent with their peers, and they clearly [lack] meaningful contacts with caring adults” (p. 476). Importantly, peer groups may act as an influential source that guides identity development for youth residing in residential care. The relative importance placed on peers for youth residing in residential care is reflected in the literature that suggests that youth in care interact more frequently with peers than adult figures (Han & Choi, 2006). As a result, peer influences on identity development may reflect the increase in peer interaction. Foreman (2004) asserts,

The peer group is vitally important to many young people because it provides them with what the workplace gave previous generations, a sense of identity and belonging, the opportunity to develop and experience ‘relationships of trust, co-operation and reciprocity among individuals and groups outside the immediate family’. (p. 145)

Peers, then, may help facilitate the development of social identities as they provide an opportunity for youth to individuate with peers who embody similar identities.

Hardy and Laszoffy (2007) suggest that youth have the power to entice other youth to conform to certain identity roles. However, safe and supportive communities that provide contexts for meaningful identity exploration, experimentation, and self-actualization may mediate the risk of maladaptive identity work (Caldwell & Smith, 2006; Hardy & Laszoffy, 2007; Park, 2009; Search Institute, 2012). Adolescent rolelessness may constrain interactions with a supportive community and leisure may become an optimal space for meaningful identity work. Iwasaki (2007) asserts that leisure is an ideal life space for meaning making because individuals are capable of self-selecting meaningful engagements. Thus, leisure may provide a compensatory role for the lack of meaningful adolescent roles in employment, education, and family.

Conceptualizing Leisure

The complexities of leisure are multifaceted and challenging to discern and define. Kivel (1998) asserts, “leisure has typically been conceptualized along two lines – objective leisure which is measured in terms of discretionary or free time and subjective leisure which is measured in terms of one’s experience and/or state of mind” (p. 36). As such, leisure is not understood from one perspective or one definition because it involves a multiplicity of subjective meanings and representations.

Qualities of leisure. Chapter One identifies three definitions of leisure described as activity, time, and state-of-mind. Despite the disparate meanings attributed to each paradigm, leisure maintains several inseparable qualities that distinguish it from other life domains such as school, work, and family. Leisure is celebrated for being freely chosen,

intrinsically motivating, and enjoyable. These three qualities are integral to the leisure experience and will be used to define leisure in this chapter. It is important to note that people may experience life circumstances that compromise active engagement in leisure that is freely chosen, intrinsically motivating and enjoyable.

Freedom of choice. Neulinger (1981) suggests that freedom, or the perception of freedom, is the most essential criterion for leisure. As such, freedom is embedded in the activity, time, and state of mind definitions. Freedom may be a function of time (i.e., free time residual to obligation), a state of mind (i.e., the perception that one is experiencing freedom), or activity (i.e., activities that are freely chosen and free from responsibility). Kaplan (1960) agrees that freedom is implicit to the leisure experience as he defines leisure as “a minimum of obligation to others, to routine, even to oneself” (p. 22). Moreover, Dumazedier (1968) states, “leisure does imply freedom from those institutional obligations that are prescribed by the basic form of social organization” (p. 251). Furthermore, leisure can be described as a dynamic and highly variant experience that encompasses a breadth of activities, which can be selected relatively freely. As a result, the variability of leisure may allow people to select activities more freely than in other life domains (Brightbill, 1960; Bull, 2009; Dumazider, 1974).

The freedom of leisure becomes increasingly complex when explored in-depth. The concept can be divided into two principal constructs defined as freedom-from and freedom-to. deGrazia (1962) defines leisure as “freedom from the necessity of being occupied” (p. 14). Brightbill (1960) defines leisure as the freedom to engage in personally meaningful activities. Brightbill (1960) captures the freedom-to definition of leisure in the following statement, “leisure is time in which our feelings of compulsion should be

minimal. It is *discretionary* time, the time to be used according to our own judgment or choice” (p. 4). This suggests that leisure can be conceptualized as being devoid of responsibility, obligation, and commitment. As such, leisure is pursued for the intrinsic rewards uninfluenced by external forces. Furthermore, leisure may provide individuals with opportunities to disengage from the stresses of daily life and engage in activities that allow for passive reflection and appreciation (Carruthers & Hood, 2007; Hood & Carruthers, 2007; Kleiber, 1999; 2012).

Thus, leisure may be different from other life domains by being a liberating and relatively unconstrained experience. Furthermore, the freedom-to and freedom-from definitions of leisure suggest that freedom is an important component of the leisure experience. The freedom to pursue leisure based on personal interest also suggests that leisure is an intrinsically rewarding experience as engagements are often self-selected and based on intrinsic reward. As such, leisure may be a fundamental life space where a person is free to engage in activities that meet their intrinsic needs. Although freedom has been described as an implicit quality of leisure it is important to stress that there may be certain circumstances that make it difficult for individuals to express themselves freely in leisure such as, life circumstance, cost, obligation, and disability. The freedom of leisure may not translate to the residential care context as these facilities may engender many qualities that compromise freedom (e.g., mandated leisure, restrictiveness, financial constraints, and lack of time). Thus, leisure may be best defined as a form of relative freedom.

Intrinsic motivation. Leisure is also described as being intrinsically motivating and expressive in nature. The intrinsic element of leisure is reflected in the freedom to

select leisure based on its intrinsic qualities. Early theorists of leisure suggest that leisure occurs when extrinsic motivations are suppressed. However, contemporary scholars have challenged defining leisure as devoid of extrinsic motivation and report a compilation of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Neulinger, 1981). Despite these contemporary ideologies, intrinsic motivation remains a central component of the leisure experience.

Witt and Ellis (1985) describe the types of motivation in the following statement

The distinction between the types of motivations is in the reward a participant seeks to attain from involvement. If no reward other than satisfaction associated with participation in the activity is present, the activity is considered to be intrinsically motivated. When some external pressure or pay-off is the individual's primary reason for participation, the activity is considered to be extrinsically motivated. (p. 112)

Neulinger's (1981) paradigm of leisure employs two central constructs, freedom and motivation, to describe the leisure phenomenon. He postulates that leisure is best expressed on a continuum of freedom and motivation where "pure leisure" is a product of complete freedom and intrinsic motivation. Pure leisure is juxtaposed with "pure work" which is denoted by perceived constraint and extrinsic motivation. Csikszentmihalyi (1981) agrees with the intrinsic component of leisure and defines leisure as expressive in nature. He defines expressiveness by activities that are pursued for "immediate intrinsic rewards" instead of "delayed gratification" (p. 332).

As such, intrinsic reward is inseparable from the leisure experience and often governs the motivation to engage. The implicitness of intrinsic motivation suggests that leisure may be one of the only life spaces where an individual can engage in activities

based on the outcomes inherent in the activity. Often, these outcomes are identified as satisfaction and enjoyment derived from participation.

Positive emotionality. Vitterso (2010) suggests that the connection between leisure and emotion is vast and he proposes that leisure may be one of the most successful avenues for generating positivity. Thus, leisure, being intrinsically motivating and freely chosen, provides an optimal context to increase life satisfaction, generate positive emotionality, and quality of life. Vitterso (2010) suggests that the versatility of leisure generates a range of positive emotion from relaxation to flow (see Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; 2008). It can be posited that the intrinsic motivation and freedom of choice implicit in the leisure experience may be precursors of positive emotion. Therefore, the self-governed nature of leisure may permit the selection of experiences based on motivations for positivity (Carruthers & Hood, 2007; Hood & Carruthers, 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Thus, leisure is vast and occupies a spectrum of positive emotion. Despite the strong correlation between leisure and positive emotionality, leisure cannot be described simply by positive emotion as it may cause many negative emotions such as boredom, apathy, and anxiety (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). As a result, leisure may contribute to an emotional range inclusive of both positive and negative emotions. Leisure may generate negative emotion; leisure may provide an outlet for the expression of negative emotion and this release may result in positive feelings in the aftermath; and leisure may generate positive emotion directly.

Not all leisure is created equal; however, leisure experiences that are freely chosen and based on intrinsic reward may be a cause of significant positive emotion. The positive emotion generated during leisure has been described as contributing to stress

coping, a buffer against negative emotion, and a source of optimism (Carruthers & Hood, 2007; Hood & Carruthers, 2007; Hornberger et al., 2010; Iwasaki, 2007; Kleiber, 1999; Kleiber, Hutchinson, & Williams, 2002). Therefore, the instrumental role of leisure in generating positive emotionality may provide a source of positivity for youth in a residential care context.

Leisure: public and private experiences. Although leisure may be defined generally as activity, time, or state of mind it remains a multidimensional and highly complex phenomenon. The multiplicity of leisure is reflected in leisure's subjectivity, as no two leisure experiences are exactly the same. Kelly (1983) asserts that leisure is highly subjective and postulates, "different activities may have much the same meanings to the participants" (p. 1) or that "the same activity may have different meanings at different times for the same person" (p. 2). Thus, leisure is complex, highly subjective, and dynamic. Furthermore, leisure may be experienced in solitude or solidarity and it may enhance or thwart human development. Importantly, leisure may be an optimal context for the exploration-commitment relationship necessary for meaningful identity work and it may provide a space to express personal and public identities.

Public leisure. The leisure space provides opportunities for people to connect and reconnect with others in meaningful ways and this is often supported by the intrinsic motivation and positivity that is drawn from leisure participation (Kerstetter, Yarnal, Son, Yen, & Baker, 2008). As such, the social space inherent in the leisure experience may assist with social identification and assimilation, which is necessary for identity development. Moreover, social leisure may contribute to the shared values, beliefs, and attitudes among a group and it may result in enhanced relationships and interpersonal

flourishing (Ryff & Singer, 2000; Whitlock, 2007). Furthermore, Ryff and Singer (2000) indicate that the relaxed and friendly nature of leisure may make it an ideal context for enhanced interpersonal relationships.

Two typologies of leisure have emerged to operationalize social leisure identified as group leisure and intimate leisure. Both typologies are based on a foundation of similar interests and enjoyments shared between groups (Kelly, 1983). It is postulated that shared leisure may permit deep and meaningful connections between the people involved. The role that leisure plays in flourishing relationships is based on the non-threatening and relaxed context it often provides and this has been linked to facilitating meaningful connections and enhanced identity work (Kelly, 1983; Ryff & Singer, 2000). As such, leisure may create new social networks, it may be a source of social capital, and it may be a crucial space for social identification (Glover & Parry, 2008; Kivel, 1998; Kleiber, 1999). People who engage in social leisure may experience shared identities based on the interests and experiences inherent in the activities. Importantly, individuals may add or drop leisure activities rather inconsequentially and this may impact identity development. As such, leisure may provide an ideal context for the exploration-commitment cycle necessary for identity development (Kelly, 1983; Kivel, 1998; Kleiber, 1999; Roberts, 2011).

The relationship between social leisure and residential care may be particularly interesting. The lack of privacy and forced membership in the residential care experience may constrain solitary leisure and this may encourage youth to adhere to the norms of the group. As a result, this may encourage youth to participate in shared leisure activities based on the interests of the group and may lead to an overall institutionalized identity.

Living in residential care may encourage youth to behave in a manner that echoes the hegemonic norms of the group and this may include leisure activities. Furthermore, restricting access to social leisure outside of the home may impact identity development and place the youth at risk of developing a master identity as a youth in care. These youth may then be at risk of conforming to the shared identities and values within the care context if their experiences outside of the home are limited.

Private leisure. Individual leisure, or solitary leisure, is polarized from social leisure as these activities are highly individualized and performed individually. These pursuits attend to the interests of the individual, they are self-governed and hold significant personal meaning that is not coerced by external forces. As such, solitary leisure is highly intrinsic, personalized, and is not socially prescribed. Kelly (1983) posits, “considerable leisure is solitary in nature” (p. 18) and these pursuits may occur in isolation or in crowds. However, a central tenant to solitary leisure remains that engagement is often detached from others and that it is an individual experience. The individual nature of solitary leisure provides a context for contemplation and self-exploration that may assist with identity development. As such, solitary leisure pursuits may provide a context for self-reflection and self-exploration that enhance personal identity work. Due to the implicit qualities of leisure, solitary activities may provide an important space where individuals can express themselves in a style that is completely authentic and personally meaningful (Carruthers & Hood, 2007; Hood & Carruthers, 2007). Thus, solitary leisure that is an expression of one’s authenticity may be seminal to the identity development process as it provides a space for personally meaningful exploration and expression.

Kleiber (1999) indicates that an individual's personal identity is an important component of their overall sense of self and suggests that solitary leisure may provide the ideal context for personal identity development. The relationship between solitary leisure and personal identity is best represented in Kleiber's (1999) statement, "leisure facilitates individuation in affording the opportunity for exploration of alternative ways of thinking and being" (p. 102). Leisure provides a context where individuals can experiment with a variety of identities, relatively inconsequentially, for the purpose of differentiation. Thus, the versatility of leisure may provide a meaningful context for youth to explore various aspects of their personal and social identities (Erikson, 1968; Kivel, 1998; Kleiber, 1999).

Leisure and adolescence. Adolescence is characterized as a life stage that is rife with opportunity for leisure engagement. It is estimated that between 40 and 50% of adolescent time use is spent in freely chosen and unobligated activities (Caldwell & Baldwin, 2003; Kleiber et al., 1986; Raymore, Barber, Eccles, & Godbey, 1999). As a result, leisure may account for a critical life space for young people, especially with regards to the developing identity. Csikszentmihalyi (1981) highlights the significance of leisure during adolescence by suggesting that youth are inherently attracted to leisure for its immediate gratifications. Furthermore, he asserts that youth are pre-disposed to seek enjoyable leisure experiences over the delayed gratification of instrumental activities that foster adult development. Thus, the importance of leisure expressions for young adults may be even more significant due to the value they place on leisure engagement.

The centrality of leisure during adolescence may compensate for the rolelessness afflicting today's youth. Kelly (1983) postulates,

[Leisure is] a crucial life space for the expression and development of selfhood, for the working out of identities that are important to the individual. Adolescence is one life course period in which leisure settings and interactions may be most salient in the building of self-definitions. (p. 23)

Thus, leisure may gain primacy over other engagements relative to adolescent identity work. Raymore and colleagues (1999) emphasize the value of leisure during adolescence by indicating, “leisure provides an arena for role experimentation during adolescence, assists in the learning of social norms, and provides a forum in which adolescents can experiment with the challenges that will face them as adults” (p. 81). Leisure then may be one of the most influential life spaces for adolescent identity development as it can be used purposefully to develop a sense of self (Caldwell & Smith, 2006; Csikszentmihalyi, 1981; Kleiber et al., 1986).

Leisure and identity development. The fundamental qualities of leisure (i.e., freedom, intrinsic motivation, and positive emotion) position it well to conceptualize identity development. Duerden, Widmer, Taniguchi, and McCoy (2009) agree by suggesting that leisure opportunities are an ideal context for “exploration, commitment, interrelatedness, and feedback; all of which serve essential identity development functions” (p. 244). Moreover, the centrality of leisure during adolescence suggests that leisure may be an important space to engage in meaningful identity work.

Kuentzel (2000) reports, “the non-obligatory nature of leisure provides a distinctive life-space in which people can either cultivate preferred self-definitions, or creatively elaborate new self-definitions in the face of change” (p. 87). Kuentzel’s views, similar to Iwasaki (2007), suggest that leisure is an ideal context for individuals to engage

in meaningful identity expressions. Hood and Carruthers (2007) assert that leisure may be an optimal space to experience authenticity and report that leisure can play a significant role in cultivating strengths and self-awareness. As such, when leisure experiences are selected intentionally based on an individual's strengths and interests it may permit non-judgemental self-awareness and result in feeling authentic in leisure. Hood and Carruthers (2006) describe authentic leisure as "the purposeful selection of leisure involvement that is reflective of essential aspects of the self" (p. 312). Thus, leisure engagements may provide an opportunity to feel authentic and authenticity may be especially relevant for the developing identity. Furthermore, leisure experiences afford a level of self-expression and freedom that may presuppose positive identity work; however, not all leisure is created equal and leisure may elicit both positive and negative identity outcomes. Kleiber (1999) indicates that leisure may thwart identity development when

(1) Leisure choices are not linked effectively to other interests, talents, or commitments; (2) the commitment to an activity becomes so consuming that it limits attention to other potentialities; or (3) the actions taken meet with discouraging confirmations of negative aspects of self. (p. 103)

Therefore, leisure cannot be perceived exclusively as contributing to positive identity outcomes. Kleiber (1999) states that leisure may be of significant concern when deviant activities "replace other forms of experimentation that are more trustworthy in their formative potential" (p. 111). In addition, Kleiber (1999) postulates that overinvestment in leisure and meaningless leisure pursuits may hinder identity development. He reports, "identity formation may be limited by overcommitment, where the conformity associated

with identification is so pervasive that it is de-individuating and one's sense of uniqueness is undermined all together" (p. 113).

Although leisure may be subject to hindering identity development it also presents a number of opportunities for meaningful identity development. Kuentzel (2000) proposes that leisure may elicit a sense of intrapersonal continuity, a process necessary for personal identity development. As such, it is assumed that enduring leisure engagements may provide a context to experience continuity over time. Kleiber (1999) extends this notion by offering six qualities of leisure that facilitate healthy identity formation; he suggests,

Leisure can be a source of identification with others through even casual, superficial activities, but it contributes most to identity formation when (1) it affords an opportunity for exploration of and experimentation with emerging interests; (2) the interests that emerge and are refined are truly personal and in keeping with other values; (3) action taken in response to interests creates feedback from the environment, including recognition from others, that reinforces interests; (4) there is competence achieved in that action that defines and reinforces one's potentialities; (5) there is a degree of commitment to that action and to others who are involved; and (6) comfort with others emerges in the social world that is created around those interests and skills. (p. 103)

Leisure may facilitate identity development and may be a cause of optimal identity outcomes. The potentials for leisure to contributing to identity development are captured in its versatility, as it may be solitary or social; skill developing or somber; enjoyable or challenging (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008; Kleiber, 1999).

Leisure roles. A primary form of identity exploration may be through the leisure roles people assume. Leisure role identities may take precedence over identity development, especially for adolescents who are role deprived and experiencing a state of rolelessness (Kivel, 1998; Nightingale & Wolverton, 1993). As mentioned, the leisure context is relatively inconsequential, intrinsically motivating, and relatively free. Therefore, the leisure space may provide an ideal context for individuals to experiment with different roles that are freely chosen and based on their perceptions of an ideal-self (Kelly, 1983). Most important to leisure roles is the ability for a person to extend beyond socially prescribed roles that include personally meaningful identities. Leisure, then, provides an opportunity to adopt roles unexpressed in mandated engagements such as family, gender, education, and occupation. Therefore, leisure may be especially crucial for youth who are stigmatized and socially excluded as it may provide an opportunity to adopt meaningful roles unexpressed in other life domains.

Furthermore, the relative inconsequentiality of leisure may enhance the utility of leisure for being an ideal space to cultivate identities. As such, an individual may add and drop various leisure identities and roles without significant consequence and use these opportunities to enhance self-awareness. As a result, these pursuits may provide an outlet for self-awareness and self-expression where a person can reinvent or reaffirm seminal identity features based on their leisure interests (Kelly, 1983; Kleiber, 1999; Roberts, 2011). Haggard and Williams (1992) suggest that leisure provides an optimal context for people to validate identities through identity-affirming engagements. The importance of leisure as an identity-affirming engagement is reflected in Haggard and Williams' (1992) statement, "leisure may be particularly potent in the self-affirmation process. Freely

performed behaviours, such as leisure activities, influence one's self-perceptions more than constrained behaviors" (p. 3).

There are a variety of factors beyond leisure that may enhance or thwart identity development during adolescence and the living space is one. Therefore, living in a residential care context may significantly influence identity development and leisure. Despite this, there remains a dearth in the literature that explores the unique complexities of living in residential care, leisure engagement, and identity development.

Conceptualizing Residential Care

Residential care facilities are one of the primary forms of out-of-home care for child and family services and are synonymous with the terms "group home", "community residence", "extra familial care", "children's homes", and "institutional living".

Finkelstein (1991) conceptualizes the residential care environment by stating

Group homes, or community residences as they are sometimes called, have traditionally been intended to provide a living environment for young people who cannot live with their families, are not with foster families, are not ready to live independently, and yet are able to live in an ordinary community. (p. 179)

Youth residing in these facilities are often caught in between independent living and family living. Often, youth living in residential care facilities are accompanied by complex needs and compromising histories. The facilities are intended to provide a source of respite, stabilization, and temporary residency in the interim of securing long-term placement in a more stable environment (Casey, Reid, Trout, Hurley, Chmelka, & Thompson, 2010).

Residential care may not be the most optimal context for a youth to grow and develop because there are many factors implicit within the context that may compromise youth outcomes (Han & Choi, 2006; Preyde, Frensch, Cameron, White, Penny, & Lazure, 2011). Despite having multiple negative implications, residential care facilities remain a primary treatment modality in child welfare. Anglin (2011) affirms this by stating that residential care continues to play a “significant role in virtually all child and family service systems” (p. 215). As such, it is estimated that one in five youth involved in child welfare are placed in out-of-home care (James et al., 2009) and residential care serves between 15 and 30% of youth in out-of-home care (Casey et al., 2010). It is postulated that the frequent and persistent use of these facilities is concerning as the youth have encounter multiple traumatic events. The following sections will describe residential care and extrapolate salient features in relation to identity formation and leisure engagement.

Types of residential care settings. Residential care facilities are classified by a number of different variables including length of placement (e.g., long-term versus short-term), model of care (e.g., family-centred versus youth-centred), and resident demographic (e.g., gender, age, and specific needs). However, Rauktis and colleagues (2011) classify residential care facilities by “dimensions of restriction” (p. 1126) and suggest that the degree of restriction may significantly impact adolescent development. Rauktis and colleagues (2011) define restriction as the “extent to which placement settings prevent youth from experiencing regular family life and community involvement” (p. 1126). They identify four dimensions of restriction listed as physical freedom, legal status, time constraints, and financial control. It is suggested that residential care facilities operate on a continuum of restriction ranging from extremely restrictive to non-restrictive.

As such, no two facilities are alike and the type and degree of restriction may significantly alter the freedom to engage in self-selected and personally meaningful leisure activities. It is postulated that overly restrictive residential care facilities may constrain identity work and leisure engagement by depriving the youth from meaningful opportunities in the community. However, non-restrictive facilities may provide too much autonomy for the youth to manage and may be a cause of poor decisions when engaging in leisure and identity work. Thus, the balance of restriction is finite and may be a mediating factor for leisure engagement and identity development (Caldwell & Smith, 2006).

It is postulated that youth who reside in residential care may be at a greater risk of the rolelessness defined by Nightingale and Wolverson (1993). It is suggested that highly restrictive facilities may compromise access to meaningful experiences and valued social roles as they may restrict access to the community. Thus, it is sensed that restricting youth from meaningful community involvement may presuppose restriction from meaningful leisure experiences. Therefore, the degree of restriction will impact the discretionary power, autonomy, and freedom to engage in leisure and identity work.

Despite the different types of residential care facilities, they all provide diverse and specialized services to support population niches within the child welfare system. Canadian residential care facilities are unanimously described as providing support to a small number of youth in home-like environments. Statistics Canada (2010) indicates, “the term residential care facilities refers to facilities with four beds or more that are funded, licenced or approved by provincial/territorial departments of health and/or social

services.” Thus, a degree of continuity exists among Canadian residential care facilities; however, the life experiences precipitating placement are not as easy to define.

Precipitating Factors to Placement

There are a variety of factors that lead to placement in residential care and, as a result, many of these facilities are designed to respond to a number of compromising life events. FACS typically facilitates a child’s placement in residential care and placement is often described as a last resort (Schumaker et al., 2011; Trout et al., 2010). Placement is typically afforded to the least disruptive alternative and living in residential care is reserved for the extreme cases of child maltreatment. As such, youth living in residential care typically endure maltreatment (i.e., abuse and neglect), unsafe living arrangements, poor supervision, orphan status, parental mental health and drug use, the judicial system, severe mental health, and behavioural concerns prior to placement (Anglin, 2011; Han & Choi, 2006; Finkelstein, 1991; Rauktis et al., 2011; Schumaker et al., 2011; Trout et al., 2010). These precursors suggest that youth living in residential care may be at a greater disadvantage when meeting developmental outcomes as they are exposed to a myriad of early traumatic experiences. Importantly, the care context may play a significant role in contributing to or hindering developmental tasks of adolescence.

The Residential Care Context

Although Canada has policies in place that require all care facilities to be approved and licensed provincially, service delivery continues to vary significantly. The range of service provision is a reflection of the complex needs affecting youth in these settings. Despite best efforts to maintain a family-like environment, there remain many properties inherent in these facilities that impact the overall development of adolescents.

There are a number of factors implicit in the residential care context that have been linked to influencing adolescent development. Four of the factors that are linked to this study are 1) caregiver interaction, 2) peer interaction, 3) transiency and 4) degree of restriction. It is postulated that these qualities may influence core developmental tasks of adolescence, in particular identity formation and leisure engagement.

Caregiver interactions. A primary risk factor and typical precondition to placement in residential care is enduring disrupted relationships between youth and their primary caregivers (Jones, Landsverk, & Roberts, 2007). Typically, youth are placed in these facilities because they have exhausted all of their resources and connections with positive adult figures. This interruption is alarming when the youth have been deprived of significant positive adult figures that help successfully facilitate the developmental process. Often, after youth have been placed in residential care, the facility perpetuates their disruption with adult figures. Finkelstein (1991) asserts, “some group homes are now staffed by rotating shifts of child-care workers. This staffing pattern creates some disruption in the continuity of care and serves to dilute relationships” (p. 183). She continues, stating “but that often works well for those young people who have experienced too many losses and are in need of respite from loss and demanding relationships with adults” (p. 183).

It is evident that interactions with adult figures are complex and multifaceted as the quality of adult interaction is highly dependent on the needs of the youth. However, the perpetual disconnectedness and diluted relationships between adults and youth in residential care may contribute to further marginalization. Furthermore, this disconnect may continue to deprive youth of the meaningful relationships needed for positive

identity development. A fundamental need for young adults is consistent and positive interactions with adults as these interactions are identified as an asset to positive adolescent development (Search Institute, 2011). Primary adult caregivers often yield the discretionary power to facilitate engagement in activities instrumental to adolescent development such as leisure (Hutchinson, Baldwin, & Caldwell, 2003). Robertson (1999) reports that parents occupy a primary role as leisure educators for the youth they care for. Moreover, it is identified that caregivers often teach skills necessary for accessing and sustaining meaningful leisure experiences. Thus, parental figures may play an instrumental role in instilling core attitudes and beliefs relating to free time engagements, moral development, and identity formation (Grolnick et al., 1985; Rutter, 1995). Collins, Gleason, and Sesma (1985) report,

The quality of parent-child exchanges and shared decision making, over and above the specific content of parental teaching, contribute to the development of competencies that are more or less compatible with autonomous, responsible behaviour. Among these competencies are role-taking skills and advanced ego development and identity exploration. (p. 84)

As such, it is assumed that the quality of adult-youth interaction will influence leisure experiences by impacting motivations and meanings for leisure and identity.

Zegers, Schuengel, Van Ijendoorn, and Janssens (2008) propose that interactions between youth and adults, precipitating placement in residential care and occurring within the context, may contribute to the culture and dynamics of the facility. Youth who have endured multiple failed adult relationships risk internalizing maladaptive behaviours (Hardy & Laszloffy, 2007). Zegers and colleagues (2008) report that poor adult

relationships that are internalized may be expressed through resistance to future adult relationships, truancy, and violence within the residential care context. Thus, it is proposed that caregivers in a residential care facility may play a significant role in mediating the attitudes and behaviours of the youth as it relates to their prior adult relationships.

The exchanges between caregiver and youth are complex and may influence development positively or negatively. Caldwell and Smith (2006) posit that over-bearing and domineering caregivers may disrupt opportunities for self-determined and personally meaningful exploration during adolescence. The implication of caregivers' compromising adolescent autonomy and exploration is that it may impinge on developing initiative and identities (Caldwell & Smith, 2006; Kleiber, 1999; Watts & Caldwell, 2008). Conversely, disinterested caregivers may permit more freedom than manageable and autonomy becomes destructive. It is suggested that caregiver-youth interactions are central to adolescent development and identity formation (Caldwell & Smith, 2006; Grolnick et al, 1997). As a result, multiple unsuccessful youth to adult relationships may thwart adolescent identity formation and the residential care context may play a central role in managing the damage of previous unsuccessful relationships.

Inter-youth interaction. Another major characteristic of residential care is the heightened interactions between youth. Canadian residential care facilities are mandated to provide services to a minimum of four youth (Statistics Canada, 2010) and often incur an unbalanced youth to adult ratio (Courtney & Zinn, 2009). As a result, youth-to-youth interactions are maximized and youth-to-adult interactions are compromised. The outcomes of the frequency of inter-youth interactions are inconclusive. Preyde and

colleagues (2011) suggest that the constant interaction between peers may provide a context for “deviance training” (p. 661). Deviance training occurs when the majority of youth within a context (e.g., residential care facility) identify with deviant attitudes and beliefs and express these within the context (Caldwell & Smith, 2006; Preyde et al., 2011). Deviance, then, becomes normalized within the living space and is perpetuated by encouraging deviant behaviours that are congruent with the shared values inherent in the group. Gillen and colleagues (2004) agree by stating, “identification with members of a clique or gang will encourage young people to mimic the risk-taking behaviours prevalent in the group” (p. 49). Thus, deviance training may occur in the residential care context if the majority of the youth engender deviant attitudes and embed these attitudes in their daily interactions.

Conversely, constant interactions between peers may provide a space for shared pro-social thinking. Pro-social thinking is encouraged between youth when peers engender pro-social attitudes and beliefs and project these onto others (Caldwell & Smith, 2006). Thus, residential care facilities may be a source of virtue and positivity if opportunities for pro-social behaviours are fostered and facilitated within the context. Therefore, interactions between youth are not easy to predict because they encompass a myriad of underpinning motivations and meanings.

Han and Choi (2006) suggest that the deprivation of close adult relationships that often preludes placement in residential care also increases the reliance on peers for social support. It is postulated that youth living in a residential care facility may seek emotional support from peers to supplement the missing support from parents and guardians. It is important to acknowledge that closer intimacy between youth is not atypical adolescent

behaviour. However, the collapse of significant adult relationships may place these youth at a greater reliance on peers for support. Additionally, the significant vulnerabilities of youth living in residential care may impede on their level of comfort when disclosing personal information with peers who have not experienced a similar past. As a result similar stories of trauma and marginalization as experienced by youth in residential care may manifest in co-dependency. Thus, the compromising pasts of these youth may make them ill equipped to form lasting relationships with others outside of the residential care phenomenon (Han & Choi, 2006). Han and Choi (2006) comment on the social networks of youth living in out-of-home care in the following statement,

Who lost an important source of social support in the form of their parents may turn to peer groups as an alternative social network which can provide them with emotional stability and alleviate the negative effects of parental absence. (p. 536)

Thus, the motivations and meanings derived from peer interaction may not be the same for institutionalized youth and home-reared youth. Therefore the outcomes of peer contact are not necessarily unidirectional or self-explanatory.

The lack of privacy within the residential care context, due to the constant youth interactions, may impinge on adolescent individuation. Kleiber (1999) defines individuation as the act of distinguishing and differentiating from others. Important to individuation is self-reflection and personal expression that extends beyond shared norms. As such, the lack of privacy in these contexts may jeopardize individuation because opportunities to differentiate are not readily available. Furthermore, opportunities to differentiate from peers within the residential care context may be compromised by restrictive policies that limit interaction with the outside world. As a result, individuation

may be thwarted by the lack of privacy and lack of community connectedness.

Furthermore, youth may be at risk of attending to the norms of the residential care facility and succumb to the depersonalizing effects of institutional living (Abrams & Hogg, 2004).

Transiency. Transiency is an overarching and highly relevant concept that impacts many components of the care phenomenon. One of the most obvious implications of this is evidenced in the movement of youth between residence and community. As previously mentioned youth placed in residential care have a history of disrupted adult attachments. Additionally, they are profiled at risk of experiencing disruptions in other social institutions such as education, employment, family, and religion as a result of living in multiple communities with multiple caregivers (Robertson, 1999; Swift & Callahan, 2009). Therefore, these youth may not be provided with meaningful opportunities to grow and develop in a stable community with stable adult figures. Hardy and Laszloffy (2007) contend that a disrupted sense of community is a primary cause of maladaptive developmental outcomes. They assert, “the disruption of community in the lives of adolescents robs them of the security, connectedness, acceptance, and identity that they desperately need. When their sense of community is disrupted, something basic to their humanity is deeply wounded” (p. 64). This remark is echoed by Jones and colleagues (2007) who state, “the frequent change of placement is a significant risk to youth’s psychosocial development” (p. 100). Furthermore, Robertson (1999) suggests that transiency may be a catalyst for thwarted adolescent development. She indicates that severe transience may cause youth to endure feelings of isolation and alienation meanwhile creating difficulties for youth “to maintain relationships or sustain

involvement in structured leisure activities” (p. 353). Thus, it can be postulated that the significant disruptions in community living precipitating placement in residential care, and occurring within, may have significant implications on the developing identity.

Secondary to the transiency precipitating placement is the degree of transience occurring within the residential care context. Care facilities are described as engendering multiple transient behaviours and interactions. This is most evident in the number of youth and caregivers entering and leaving the facility daily. The change of staff brings inconsistent rules, expectations, interactions, and relationships (Finkelstein, 1991; Snyder, 1999). Inconsistent adult exchanges then may disrupt the youths’ ability to engage in meaningful identity forming activities. The revolving interactions between the youth and caregivers may constrain opportunities for self-exploration and expression, all the while disrupting the continuity of the care environment. Furthermore, the frequency of peers entering and leaving the residential care facility may impact the stability of peer relationships and the overall culture of the care context. The unstable interactions in residential care may presuppose that the norms and attitudes of the group will reflect the dynamic social space. As a result, youth living in residential care must learn to adapt to brief and cyclic interactions with peers and staff entering and leaving the facility. The notion of peer and caregiver transiency is of immediate concern to the developing identity as both social groups are identified as primary socializing agents for adolescent identity formation.

Degree of restriction. An important proponent of adolescent development is the degree of freedom afforded to youth for identity experimentation and exploration. As such, youth who are provided with appropriate opportunities for self-exploration and

expression may be at an advantage for successful identity work. However, significantly restrictive care facilities may constrain the self-exploration necessary for developing a healthy identity. Hansen, Larson, and Dworkin (2003) suggest that adolescent activity engagement is a seminal component of identity work and posit, “adolescents try out different youth activities as part of their identity exploration” (p. 27). Thus, it is postulated that overly restrictive and autonomy-suppressing care contexts may impinge on adolescent identity formation if core youth activities are prohibited or constrained. It is further proposed that activities with high discretionary yields (i.e., voluntary, self-governed, and personally meaningful) are most likely to contribute to identity formation (Hansen et al., 2003; Kleiber, 1999). The ability to engage in high yield activities may be constrained if the policies at the residential care facility restrict youth initiative and their discretionary time use. As such, overly restrictive policies may be detrimental to adolescent identity development if they limit the ability for youth to engage in self-directed and personally meaningful leisure experiences.

Conversely, extremely non-restrictive care facilities may provide youth with too much discretion and autonomy. As a result, these youth may not have the capacity to manage their free time engagements in a meaningful manner, which may lead to harmful or precarious engagements. Thus, too much autonomy may be disabling for youth and may impinge on meaningful identity work (Caldwell & Baldwin, 2003). This suggests that there is a finite balance between developmentally appropriate and inappropriate restrictiveness in relation to identity work (Caldwell & Baldwin, 2003). Furthermore, the degree of restriction may either impinge or enhance the ability for youth to interact with

the greater community by managing opportunities for identity exploration in discretionary activities.

Outcomes of Residential Care

The outcomes of residential care are highly equivocal and not fully understood. As such, significant attention has been directed toward uncovering the implicit qualities of these settings that influence adolescent development. There remains a vast array of outcomes that are highly contingent on the care context itself (Casey et al., 2010; McNeal, Field, Handwerk, & Roberts, 2006). Adolescents who reside in these facilities experience a myriad of internal and external developmental consequences that reflect the operations of the facility. Youth living in residential care facilities may encounter disparate outcomes based on their subjective experiences within the facility. As a result, transitioning from these settings to independent or family living is particularly difficult and problematic (Casey et al., 2010). Daining and DePanfilis (2007) state that, “youth preparing to transition from out-of-home care to adulthood contend with a multitude of challenges” (p. 1159). This section will highlight seminal findings on adolescent development and residential care and particular interest will be afforded to leisure engagement and identity formation.

Problematic outcomes. Kufeldt et al. (2000) developed strategic guidelines for residential care facilities that are intended to optimize youth outcomes. The report was motivated by the belief that “children in care of the state are entitled to the same standards of care as children who are cared for by responsible, loving parents in their community” (p. 5). Despite this, the report indicates that children involved with child welfare are often “damaged by the system set up to help them” (p. 2). As a result, the

report outlines specific standards and interventions for child welfare agencies to follow that target youth outcomes. The report emphasizes that securing a positive identity is seminal to positive youth development and that youth living in out-of-home care should be presented with the same identity development experiences as youth living in the community.

There are many implicit conditions of the care context that may impact the development of internal and external competencies. The Search Institute (2011) defines these competencies as assets that comprise the values, interests, skills, supports and resources of youth. Han and Choi (2006) compared home-reared youth with youth in residential care and suggest that youth living in residential care “exhibit significantly higher levels of loneliness” (p. 542). They suggest that the length of placement in these facilities is coupled with problematic sociability and state “adolescents who have spent many years in institutions tend to exhibit sociability problems [...] and perceive less social support from adults and peers than home-reared adolescents” (p. 536).

Sociability problems are not the only problematic outcomes of living in residential care. Trout and colleagues (2010) assert that post-discharge evaluations indicate that youth transitioning from residential care struggle with “academic underachievement, underemployment, involvement with the criminal justice system, unstable living arrangements, economic insecurity, and poor social relationships” (p. 67). Based on this information it is posited that youth living in residential care may be disadvantaged when transitioning to adulthood or back to the community. Furthermore, it is sensed that these youth experience deficiencies many life domains and that these limitations may be reflected in the leisure as well. As such, these youth may be ill

prepared when engaging in meaningful, positive, and satisfying leisure experiences that are conducive to their developmental needs, such as identity development.

Beneficial outcomes. Conversely, McNeal and colleagues (2006) argue that residential care facilities are stigmatized for being a context of negative outcomes and perpetuating hopelessness. They contend that the efficacy of residential care is evident in numerous studies that examine diverse residential care programs. They indicate that residential care contexts that facilitate consistent positive adult-youth exchanges are properly equipped to yield beneficial results. This approach to care is classified as a teaching family model of practice and is described as highly relational and family-focused with emphasis on youth skill and autonomy enhancement (Casey et al., 2010). The teaching family model of care is treatment based and operationalized through four seminal features denoted as: “a) a token economy motivation system, b) a self-government system managed by the youths, c) a standardized social skills training program, d) an ongoing program evaluation system that incorporates youth as consumer feedback within administrative performance evaluations” (McNeal et al., 2006, p. 304).

Effective residential care programs often focus on providing highly predictable interactions between the youth and adult figures. Sociability and autonomy is fostered through social skills training and providing youth with an opportunity for initiative. Most importantly, youth are empowered to shape the care environment through feedback that highlights approaches to best meet their individual needs. It is proposed that the teaching family model of care facilitates higher success rates “including decreases in the display of problem behaviour, increases in the display of social skills, decreases juvenile recidivism, and increases in academic performance” (pp. 304-305).

Due to the inconsistent findings relating to the outcomes of residential care, the influence of this context on adolescent development is not well understood and requires further exploration. Furthermore, the effect of residential care on adolescent identity formation is a relatively unexplored area of research and requires further academic attention. As such, it is postulated that the different levels of restriction and transiency may create a culture of instability that may impact the developmental tasks of youth living in residential care. Moreover, the interplay between residential care and leisure is not well understood and the centrality of leisure for this particular demographic may suggest that it is a crucial life space, especially in regard to identity formation. The relationship between leisure and identity has been explored from a variety of different demographics and results indicate that different demographics ascribe different meanings and motivations to leisure as it relates to identity development (see Kivel & Kleiber, 2000; Shaw et al., 1995; Zaff & Hair, 2003).

Due to the significant risk for social isolation to affect youth living in a residential care facility it is proposed that they may be disadvantaged when engaging in meaningful identity work. Furthermore, the residential care context may engender several constraining characteristics that may impact the youths' leisure expressions and developing identity. For example, leisure is praised as being a space that is rife with opportunities to connect with others (Glover, 2004; Sharpe, 2008), mobilize human development (Kleiber, 1999) and generate positive emotion (Hood & Carruthers, 2007; Vitterso, 2010). Conversely, leisure may also contribute to the injustices faced by these youth as it may perpetuate marginalization, criminal activity, and academic difficulties (Caldwell & Smith, 2006; Robertson, 1999; Robinson, 2009).

These two conflicting perspectives suggest that current knowledge pertaining to leisure and residential care is inconclusive. This is not to suggest that leisure does not offer valuable insights to this social issue but to emphasize that it is a relatively uncharted area of scholarship. I believe that understanding leisure may bring rise to new insights that connect to other issues affecting youth who live in residential care. Thus, the results may offer interdisciplinary value.

Chapter Three: Methods

The purpose of this chapter is to review the methodological underpinnings that framed this investigation. As mentioned, this study was guided by the question, “What is the intersection of living in residential care, leisure engagement, and adolescent identity development?” In particular, this investigation used a leisure lens to explore how youth residing in a residential care context negotiate the identity development process. In order to ensure the core research question was answered the following supporting questions were employed to guide the investigation:

1. What are the perceptions of youth living in residential care of their living situation?
2. What is the intersection between residential care and leisure?
3. What is the intersection between residential care and identity?
4. What is the intersection between leisure and identity?

This chapter will begin by providing an overview of the qualitative method and its importance for this area of research. Second, the methodological framework used to operationalize the investigation will be reviewed followed by the methods employed to gather and analyze data. Lastly, ethical considerations and strategies to ensure the trustworthiness of the study will be detailed.

Qualitative Research

A qualitative method was selected as the ideal form of inquiry to respond to the question guiding this investigation. Creswell (2007) and Patton (2002) indicate that the strategic pairing of research question and design is a fundamental prerequisite to

beginning any research program. Qualitative inquiry is juxtaposed with quantitative research as it uses narratives as the medium to glean insights into the experiences of individuals (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). This investigation sought to explore the experiences of youth residing in a residential care context. As such, it seemed only appropriate to frame the investigation within a qualitative approach. Moreover, the highly subjective nature of leisure makes qualitative research an ideal approach to explore the complexities of the leisure experience (Kelly, 1983; Kivel, 1998).

This study did not seek to test a hypothesis, describe a causal relationship, or quantify a phenomenon, as experienced in quantitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Sechrest & Sidani, 1995; Smith, 2005). Instead, this study sought to understand and describe the contextual factors involved in the relationship between living in residential care, leisure engagement, and adolescent identity development. Fundamental to qualitative research is the belief that knowledge is best acquired through interaction and interpretation (Creswell, 2007; Patton 2002). Therefore, the interactions between the researcher, participant, and environment provide a vehicle to glean insights into the phenomenon under investigation. Thus, the intent is to gather detailed or “rich” descriptions of a complex phenomenon by examining the perspectives of experienced individuals (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002; Sechrest & Sidani, 1995).

The process of gathering complex and detailed information about a phenomenon is of paramount interest to qualitative inquiry (Denzin & Linclon, 2000). Creswell (2007) asserts that the ability to understand the intricate and minute details of a phenomenon is achieved through examining multiple sources of evidence within the natural environment. Being present in the context where the phenomenon exists increases the ability to provide

a conceptually whole explanation. As such, the naturalistic tendencies of qualitative inquiry are expected to minimize the distance between the researcher and the participants, which may result in uncovering important and unanticipated understandings (Patton, 2002). A seminal component of qualitative research is to achieve a sense of closeness with the study site and participants. The closeness implicit in qualitative research positions it well for cultivating detailed and in-depth accounts of a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002).

The emphasis placed on interaction as the primary avenue to gather data suggests that qualitative research is inductive in nature (Patton, 2002). Creswell (2007) suggests that interaction is ideal when exposing the minute details necessary to understand complex issues that quantitative research is at risk of oversight. The participants informed the results of the study by disclosing information pertinent to the research questions and their unique experiences living in residential care. Thus, the participants embody the discretionary power to guide the course of the research by providing highly contextualized and descriptive information about a phenomenon from their perspectives. I believe that youth currently residing in residential care yield valuable information for the purpose of this study that is unavailable in other groups.

Paradigmatic view: Interpretivism. In keeping with my interest in ensuring the perspectives of the participants remain at the forefront an interpretivist lens framed this study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Patton, 2002). Qualitative scholarship is comprised of a number of lenses, or paradigms, that guide the process of inquiry. Guba (1990) defines a paradigm as a “basic set of beliefs that guide action” (p. 18). Paradigms are inseparable

from the research experience as they are consistent with the researcher's worldview and inevitably guide the process of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Patton, 2002)

The interpretivist paradigm is distinguishable from the other paradigms in regards to the importance placed on interpreting the meaning behind an individual's action (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Interpretivism believes that action is laden with meaning and that an individual's behaviour is intentional and a result of conscious or subconscious motives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). As such, it is assumed that in order to understand the behaviours and actions of an individual, careful consideration must be afforded to exploring the meanings that underlie the behavior (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Willis, Jost, & Nilakanta, 2007).

Within interpretivism it is believed that reality is socially constructed and multifaceted. Thus, an experience or phenomenon may be comprised of a multiplicity of meanings and realities as constructed by the individuals involved (Ponterotto, 2005; Willis et al., 2007). Due to the multidimensional nature of reality, careful consideration must be directed toward how an individual internalizes his or her perspective and experience (Ponterotto, 2005). A qualitative design, influenced by an interpretivist perspective, is of great relevance to this study as I am interested in understanding the social world that is constructed by youth living in a residential care context. This paradigm allowed me to investigate and describe how these youth interpret and experience the residential care environment and how these interpretations influence identity formation.

Methodological framework. This investigation used a phenomenological approach to frame the course of inquiry. Phenomenology is a qualitative methodology

that places significant value on exploring the true essence of a phenomenon. The salient features of a phenomenon are uncovered by exploring the lived experience or “inner experience unprobed in everyday life” (Merriam, 2002, p. 7). Phenomenology is most interested in understanding the implicit and fundamental characteristics of a phenomenon that are necessary for the phenomenon to exist (Patton, 2002; Sokolowski, 2002). Patton (1990) asserts that phenomenology is grounded in “the assumption that *there is an essence or essences to shared experiences*” (p. 70). The emphasis placed on investigating the inner experience provides an outlet for participants to disclose personally meaningful, comprehensive and detailed accounts of their unique experiences of a phenomenon. In order to ensure the perspectives of the participants remain at the forefront the researcher must be free from suppositions and be subjectively open to emergent ideas offered by the participants (Moustakas, 1994). The ability to be subjectively open throughout the research process is assisted by the phenomenological consciousness, which Moustakas (1994) refers to as “the science of describing what one perceives, senses, and knows in one’s immediate awareness and experience” (p. 26).

Phenomenology is operationalized through an exploration of both objective and subjective consciousness; a process identified as *intentionality*. Intentionality, as defined by Moustakas (1994), is “the internal experience of being conscious of something” (p. 28). Furthermore, Moustakas (1994) asserts that intentionality “requires that we be present to ourselves and to things in the world, that we recognize that self and world are inseparable components of meaning” (p. 28). Thus, intentionality involved a process of analyzing and interpreting reality in relation to one’s associated feelings and experiences (Moustakas, 1994). This process is referred to as the noema-noesis relationship where the

phenomenon (noema) in its perceived state is examined in relation to its underlying meaning (noesis). Thus, the noema-noesis relationship involves a process of negotiation, as one's perception of a phenomenon is distilled to uncover its meaning. Moustakas (1994) reports, "the textual (noematic) and structural (noetic) dimensions of phenomena and the derivation of meanings is an essential function of intentionality" (p. 31).

Thus, intentionality involves a process of describing the lived experience in full and distilling the experience until reaching an understanding of the meanings or essences of the experience. Moustakas (1994) indicates that reflection is a major component of uncovering meaning and that the process of distilling information to its core meaning involves "perceiving, remembering or judging, just what is *intended*, what *appears*, what is *presented*" (p. 71). Moreover, Moustakas (1994) suggests,

In the process of recalling an experience, for example, shadings are clarified; details are added; refinements bring new voices, sounds, and visions. This is a natural process as we extend and correct our perceptions, memories, and judgments, as we elucidate our experience. The reflective process makes possible deeper exploration of the intentional structures of noesis and noema. (p. 72)

Transcendental phenomenology. Specifically, this study will employ Transcendental Phenomenology as the phenomenological approach to collect and analyze data (Moustakas, 1994; Sokolowski, 2002). Transcendental Phenomenology is distinguished from other forms of phenomenology by the investment placed on uncovering the meaning and essence of human experience. Moerer-Urdahl and Cresswell (2004) indicate,

Two major approaches – hermeneutic phenomenology and transcendental phenomenology – represent philosophical assumptions about experience and ways to organize and analyze phenomenological data. [...] Meaning is the core of transcendental phenomenology of science, a design for acquiring and collecting data that explicates the essence of human experience. Hermeneutics requires reflective interpretation of a text or a study in history to achieve a meaningful understanding. (pp. 19-20)

The transcendental method has been selected as an optimal approach to frame this investigation as emphasis is placed on understanding the meaning people ascribe to their unique lived experience. Specific to Transcendental Phenomenology is the act of going beyond the conscious level of understanding to achieve a philosophical and practical explanation of the data (Sokolowski, 2002).

The ability to achieve philosophical and practical explanations is facilitated through three central processes identified as *Epoche*, *Reduction*, and *Imaginative Variation* (Moustakas, 1994; Sokolowski 2002). *Epoche* is defined as the act of isolating the phenomenon from external influences. Moreover, it is described as a form of openness and resistance to the natural attitude where one's "predilections, prejudices, [and] predispositions" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85) are set aside to view the phenomenon as if it were for the first time. Moustakas (1994) describes *Epoche* as a process where the researcher is to

Refrain from judgment, to abstain from or stay away from the everyday, ordinary way of perceiving things. [...] Everyday understandings, judgments, and

knowings are set aside, and phenomena are revisited, freshly, naively, in a wide open sense, from the vantage point of a pure of transcendental ego. (p. 33)

Thus, Epoche involves a process of openness and naivety where preconceptions are bracketed out and the phenomenon itself becomes the center of attention. I followed the principles of Epoche throughout the course of the research by bracketing out information unrelated to the research question. Furthermore, I remained mindful of my predispositions and managed these to ensure the phenomenon was viewed freshly and naively. It is understood that absolute Epoche may be difficult to attain; however, I used my progressive subjectivity, reflexivity, and peer debriefing as three strategies to manage Epoche.

Reduction emerges out of the openness of Epoche. Reduction strives to derive “textural description of the meanings and essence of the phenomenon” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 34). Thus, it seeks to provide a comprehensive description of the phenomenon that captures the experience in its most authentic form. Moustakas reports,

In the Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction, each experience is considered in its singularity, in and for itself. The phenomenon is perceived and described in its totality, in a fresh and open way. A complete description is given to its essential constituents, variations of the perceptions, thoughts, feelings, sounds, colors, and shapes. (p. 34)

Every statement delivered by the participant is afforded equal value and individual and collective textural descriptions are integrated descriptively in the study. The process distills the phenomenon to its descriptive features by being sensitized to the contextual features of the phenomenon and including this data in the findings. Furthermore, the

process is managed by limiting the descriptive scope to information that is relevant to the question of interest (Moustakas, 1994). Thus, the outcome is a narrative that outlines seminal attributes of the phenomenon as it relates to the lived experiences of the participants.

Lastly, *Imaginative Variation* seeks to contextualize the “structural essences of experience” (Mousakas, 1994, p. 35). The process seeks to derive the meanings, or structures, associated with the textural descriptions. This involves a process of synthesizing and integrating important characteristics expressed in the data that conceptualize the essences, or true meaning, of the phenomenon. Husserl (1977) addresses Imaginative Variation as higher order intellect and states that core to Imaginative Variation is the arrival at a “*structural differentiation among the infinite multiplicities* of actual and possible *cognitions*, that relate to the object in question and thus can somehow go together to make up the unit of an identifying synthesis” (p. 63). Central to Imaginative Variation is distilling the textual descriptions achieved during Reduction and capturing their true meanings. The possible meanings underlining the lived experience are contemplated and examined from different vantage points in order to achieve the closest representation of the true meaning of the phenomenon.

The utility of Transcendental Phenomenology for this study is evident. Transcendental phenomenology allowed me to gain in-depth and textual information about the interplay between residential care, leisure, and identity development. Furthermore, the processes of transcendental phenomenology assisted with understanding the multiple meanings ascribed to the lived experiences of the participants. Lastly, the procedures involved with Transcendental Phenomenon increased the rigor of the

investigation by providing a structure and framework to approach the data with. The methods and procedures of this study are described in the following.

Methods of Preparation

The following section will provide an overview of the methods used to collect and analyze the data for this investigation. This section has been divided into four subsections identified as 1) participants, 2) data collection, 3) data analysis, and 4) trustworthiness.

Participants. The process of selecting and obtaining high yield participants was achieved through purposeful sampling, in particular criterion sampling. Criterion sampling involves a process of identifying and selecting individuals to participate in a study who meet previously assigned criteria that is relevant to the interest of the research question (Patton, 2002). The ability to attract participants who yield valuable information is enhanced by identifying inclusionary criteria in advance of recruiting participants. This strategy is especially useful in phenomenology as criterion sampling limits the selection of participants to those who have experienced the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2007). As a result, the ability to purposefully select participants may assist with ensuring that the information collected is useful and relevant to the intended outcomes of the investigation (Patton, 2002).

The inclusionary criteria were first determined for the residential care facility. As such, three specific conditions were delineated for the facility to meet the criteria for the study. Primarily, the facility was required to be an adolescent residential care facility that accommodates youth who are involved with Family and Children Services. Secondly, the facility was required to be located in southern Ontario. Lastly, the anticipated length of stay at the home was required to be a minimum of three months. It is important to note

that gaining entry to the study site was complicated by the strong protectionist discourses in place that protect the youth from outside harm. Consequently, these discourses also made it extremely difficult for me access the youth, as I was required to navigate through multiple gatekeepers before reaching the youth (Butler & Williamson, 1994; Graham, & Fitzgerald, 2010). The following information will outline some of the complexities of accessing this population.

Ethical clearance and gatekeeping. Due to the vulnerabilities of the youth living at the facility I was required to undergo three separate REB reviews. The ethics review process required me to be granted REB clearance from Brock University, followed by the agency who owned the facility, and then Family and Children's Services (FACS). The three REB reviews occurred sequentially as the ethical clearance of one prompted the review of the following. Importantly, embedded within the review at FACS were multiple REB reviews at each level of management. As such, before I was officially granted permission to speak with the youth lower, middle and upper level management at FACS had to review the proposed project. It was not until after all levels of management reviewed the project and were on board that I could start the interviews. The entire process involved with receiving ethical clearance took approximately six months.

Upon receiving approval from all of the REBs, I met with each youth individually in a private location at the home to inform them about the study. This process involved an informal and interactive presentation (see appendix G), which reviewed the study in full. At this time, the youth were informed of the intent of the study, their rights as a participant, and the risks and benefits associated with the study. The youth were able to ask questions throughout the presentation and at the end they were asked if they would

like to participate. I made note of the youth who were interested in participating in the study and put together information packages to be delivered to the youths' families. The information packages consisted of the letter of information, information sheet, consent form, and the presentation handouts (see appendix A, B and G). Staff members at the home distributed the information packages to the guardians of the interested youth when they took the youth home for their weekend visits.

The decision to allow staff members to deliver the information packages was in part justified by my access to the families and by the typical practices at the home. The weekly routine involved the staff transporting the youth home to their families on the weekends and bringing with them any information forms that were collected during the week (e.g. forms from school or from the agency). Thus, the staff members delivered the information about the study alongside other relevant forms collected during the week. The guardians were then allowed to decide if they wanted their child to participate. If interested, the guardian and youth were expected to sign the consent form and return it to the home in a sealed envelope addressed to me. In addition to this, the youth and guardians who were not interested in participating in the study were asked to return the unsigned consent form in a sealed envelope addressed to me.

Participant description. Phenomenology does not require a specific number of participants to ensure a more rigorous and comprehensive research design (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002; Sokolowski, 2002). As such, phenomenology is primarily concerned with attracting high yield individuals to discuss their lived experiences of a phenomenon. The appropriate balance between too many and too few participants is of paramount interest to phenomenology. With that, too many participants may result in an

overwhelming amount of data yet too few may lead to inconclusive results (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002).

Six youth participated in the study, which consisted of all but one youth living at the facility. The decision to include six of the seven youth in the study was based on their interest to participate and my desire to achieve an honest and fair representation of the lived experiences at the home. Of the youth participants five were male and one was female. The ages of the participants ranged from 11 to 16 with the average age being 13 years old. Furthermore, the average length of stay at the facility was five months, ranging from two to seven months. In terms of ethnicity, five of the participants were Canadian and one was Jamaican. Lastly, three of the participants were living with their mothers in a single parent home prior to coming to the facility, one participant was formerly living with his grandparents and the remaining two were living with their mother and step-father. All of the youth involved in the study had a diagnosed mental illness and in addition to this, multiple participants were diagnosed with an attention deficit disorder.

Importantly, due to the attention deficits of some of the participants, access to their realities at the home was limited as they were unable to fully engage in the interview process. As a result, many of the participants struggled to respond to the open ended questions. In order to manage the lack of depth in the participants' responses I selected to incorporate ethnographic techniques such as participant observations and field logs as supporting methods of data collection. The following section describes in detail the methods and protocols employed in the data collection process.

Methods of Data Collection

Qualitative research often examines multiple sources of evidence in order to achieve a fuller depiction of a phenomenon. Patton (2002) states, “the only way for us to really know what another person experiences is to experience the phenomenon as directly as possible for ourselves” (p. 106). Multiple sources of data can be useful when gaining highly contextualized and descriptive information necessary to understand an individual’s lived experience (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). Furthermore, several sources of data may assist with triangulation, a process of combining methods in a study to strengthen the accuracy of the results (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Dey, 1993; Patton, 2002). This study used semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and document analysis as three principal methods of data collection. The results of the investigation were primarily based on the data collected from the semi-structured interviews and participant observations. Document analysis was used as a secondary and complimentary method of data collection to depict a more accurate representation of the phenomenon.

Semi-structured interviewing. Semi-structured interviewing was used to uncover rich and descriptive information about the unique lived experiences of the youth. Moustakas (1994) indicates that personal interviewing is an optimal data collection method in phenomenology and states

The phenomenological interview involves an informal, interactive process and utilizes open-ended comments and questions. Although the primary researcher may in advance develop a series of questions aimed at evoking a comprehensive account of the person’s experience of the phenomenon, these are varied, altered,

or not used at all when the co-researcher shares the full story of his or her experience of the bracketed question. (p. 114)

As such, semi-structured interviewing was chosen as a principal method of inquiry given its flexible nature and ability to incorporate emergent ideas in the interview (Burg, 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Patton, 2002).

Due to the design of semi-structured interviews, relevant topics missed in the interview guides that emerge during conversation can be incorporated in the study. Therefore, unanticipated information pertinent to the specific lived experiences of the participants can be included. As a result, it was postulated that the semi-structured interviews might provide an ideal space to discuss the complexities of the residential care phenomenon as per the unique experiences of the youth. The ability to include emergent ideas in the data collection phase is important for phenomenology as Moustakas (1994) states, “the importance of self-reports in data collection [is] emphasized so that the research participant [feels] his or her contributions [are] valued” (p. 110). Therefore, semi-structured interviewing may provide the participants with an opportunity to become fully immersed in the research and feel like a valued part of the research process (Moustakas, 1994; Sokolowski, 2000).

Pilot test. Initially, the interview guides were pilot tested with one youth who embodied similar characteristics to the inclusionary criteria. The youth who participated in the pilot test was 13 years old, female, and currently living in a residential care facility in southern Ontario. Pilot testing is consistent with the literature on Transcendental Phenomenology and qualitative research as a method to improve rigor (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002).

The purpose of the pilot test was to ensure that the questions asked during the interviews were effective at generating discussions relevant to the interest of the study. During the pilot test, it was determined that some of the questions used language that was challenging for the participant to comprehend and required revision. In addition, it was found that the interviews were lengthy and not 'youth-friendly' as the participant struggled to maintain her attention and drive throughout the interviewing. As such, it was determined that embedding participatory elements in the interviews would benefit the participants and better reflect their abilities and needs. The participatory component to the interviews provided the youth with a creative outlet to express their opinions (i.e., poems, drawing, and songs) meanwhile breaking up the discussion.

The pilot test also determined that the proposed journaling activity was not appropriate for the population of interest. I came to this realization after a conversation with the participant during the pilot test. The young woman in the pilot test indicated that the journal activity was difficult to complete as she struggled to remember to journal daily. Additionally, the participant did not have the literacy or writing skills necessary to fully participate in the journaling and she required the assistance from a computer when responding to the questions asked in the journal. Several of the youth living at the home also had similar struggles with reading and writing and it was determined that the journal was not an effective method of data collection. Although the journaling activity was eliminated from the study it was felt that many of the questions and activities outlined in the journal were valuable. As such, the decision was made to include most of the activities from the journal as participatory elements in the interviews.

The interview. Once the interview guides were pilot tested and modified accordingly I began to engage in the interview process. The study included two separate semi-structured interviews with embedded participatory elements. The first interview was intended to acquaint myself with the youth and garner an understanding of their life at the residential care facility. The second interview focused more on the leisure interests and identities of the youth participants. I was philosophically committed to shifting the power over to the participants. Moustakas (1994) states, “the interviewer is responsible for creating a climate in which the research participant will feel comfortable and will respond honestly and comprehensively” (p. 114). As such, I made a conscious effort to make sure that the youth were comfortable during the interviews. I afforded the youth with the discretionary power to decide on the times and locations of the interviews. All of the youth approached me at times they felt fitting to be interviewed and also determined the locations of the interviews.

The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. All of the participants agreed to have their interviews recorded with the exception of one. Modifications were made for the one youth who refused to be audio-recorded and her responses were written verbatim as stated during the interviews. The interviews lasted between 20 and 60 minutes, depending on the youth, with the median time being 33 minutes in duration. Due to the policies at the home the youth were unable to leave the property and consequently the interviews occurred in a private location at the home. Although the interviews occurred in a private location, I acknowledge the limitations of securing the complete privacy of the participants in a secured facility. The staff members were ultimately aware of who was being interviewed and where the interviews were

being held as I depended on them to unlock the rooms for the interviews. This actuality may have affected the participant's ability to speak freely and openly about the realities of living in a residential care context.

Participatory activities. Within each interview were multiple participatory activities that offered an additional and creative outlet for the youth to express their opinions and perspectives. The creative activities were strategically placed in the interviews to compliment the questions asked and prompt further discussion. The following information outlines the participatory activities and their place in the semi-structured interviews.

Leaf activity: The leaf activity was included in the first interview as a tool to glean insights into the social connectedness of the youth participants. Each youth was presented with a picture of a leaf with eight veins and they were asked to record a name of an important person in their life for each of the veins on the leaf. When frontloading the activity, the youth were assured that they did not have to record a name for all of the veins if they did not have enough important people. As such, they could record more or less than eight people based on their social networks. In order to respect the privacy of the youth and their close ones, actual names were replaced with a statement that I typed indicating the person's role in the youth's life.

Alphapoem: During the initial interview the youth were asked to create an alphapoem that paired each letter of their name with a personal descriptor. The alphapoem was strategically placed in the initial interview to acquaint me with the youth and prompt a discussion around their personalities and interests. The end result was a series of words that represented the youths' unique traits, interests, and talents. Given that

the alphapoems were guided by the participants' actual names the poems were not included in the findings because this would have compromised their privacy. However, the information shared in the poems was included separately throughout the findings as supporting descriptors.

Pie of life: The pie of life activity was included in the second interview to compliment the discussion around the youths' leisure engagements and time use. Each youth was presented with a circle on a piece of paper and they were asked to divide the circle into smaller segments based on how they spent their time. The youth were informed that they should afford larger segments for the activities they pursue more often and smaller segments for the activities they spend less time in. The result was a pie chart that represented how the youth typically spent their time at the home.

Glass half full and half empty: The glass half full and half empty exercise was incorporated in the second interview and used to support the discussion about the youths' life at the home. In the activity, the youth were presented with two pieces of paper with a picture of a glass printed on each. The youth were asked to fill one glass with words that describe the aspects of their life that contribute to their happiness and the other glass with words that describe the aspects of their life that make them unhappy.

Leisure across time: The final activity was included in the second interview and complemented the discussion about the youths' identity and leisure interests. The leisure across time activity was interested in determining the youths' past, present, and future leisure interests. Each youth was presented with a chart with three columns that had headings for past leisure, present leisure, and future leisure. The youth were asked to

record information in each column about their specific leisure interests for the specific period of time.

Participant observation. Central to this investigation was the use of ethnographic techniques, such as participant observations. Throughout the course of the study I invested time at the study site collecting anecdotal data. The use of observations was integral to achieving insights into the ebb and flow of daily life at the home. As such, I invested approximately seven months at the facility where I spent between 15 and 20 hours a week inside the facility, collecting field notes. During this time I recorded information about the interactions between people at the facility, the daily routines, and unique occurrences. In addition to this, I was sensitized to the leisure experiences of the youth while they were at the home. I used my field observations as complimentary sources of data and incorporated these insights during my interviews with the youth. Furthermore, I was able to compare and contrast my observational notes with the information shared in the interviews. Lastly, my field experience allowed me to paint a fuller picture of the lived experiences of the youth at the home.

Document analysis. In the interim of waiting to receive REB clearance, I reviewed publically available documents that were related to the research questions. The types of documents that were initially analyzed consisted of mission statements, vision statements, brochures, annual reports, and newspaper articles intersecting with FACS and the agency that owned the facility. The initial stage of document analysis was intended to provide a general depiction of the organizations involved with the study. After receiving REB clearance, I engaged in the second phase of document analysis where I extended my analysis to include private documents such as the facility's policies and procedures. The

purpose of reviewing these documents was to garner a sense of how the agency operated by developing a comprehensive understanding of the policies in place. Furthermore, I focused my attention toward the language used in these documents to describe the youth and leisure. In addition to this, I reviewed the documents for sensitizing concepts to help with the development of the interview guides.

Methods of Data Analysis

Data analysis occurred in tandem with the data collection. Patton (2002) indicates that data analysis begins with transcribing interviews and completing field notes. As such, each interview was transcribed, verbatim, directly after the interview was completed. When transcribing the interviews I replaced actual names with pseudonyms and generalized or removed other identifying characteristics in order to eliminate the risk of linking the participants to the study. Furthermore, I recorded in my field log immediately after every visit to the home. In addition to this, I engaged in memo writing throughout the course of the data collection and analysis. During my memo writing I recorded emergent ideas that were shared by the participants and recorded my preliminary interpretations of the data.

In addition to my preliminary analysis and memo writing, I used Moustakas' (1994) modification of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method of phenomenological data analysis. I began by conducting an extensive review of the transcripts and field notes in order to become familiar with the data. This process required me to complete several reviews of the documents before feeling fully immersed in the data. While reviewing the data I followed the principles of the phenomenological attitude which is characterized by becoming completely immersed in the data and bracketing out any knowledge, attitudes,

or judgments that are not directly explained in the data (Moustakas, 1994; Sokolowski, 2000). In order to achieve the phenomenological attitude I periodically debriefed with my research committee, engaged in reflexive writing, and wrote reflectively in my journal. During this time I made a concerted effort to shed new light on my preconceptions as opposed to bracket them out.

After I immersed myself in the data I began to engage in *Horizontalization* where each statement disclosed in the interviews was given equal value and examined through *Epoche* (Moustakas, 1994). As a result, all statements with a direct relationship to the research questions were listed in a descriptive narrative pertaining to each individual interview. After the relevant statements were recorded I then reviewed, evaluated, and reflected on the statements to identify “unique qualities of the experience” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 128). These unique qualities, or essences, were recorded and formed what Moustakas (1994) identifies as meaning-units. The meaning-units were analyzed through the constant comparative method where they were compared, contrasted, and cluster them into related themes. These themes described the core essences of the phenomenon and the thematic meaning-units were paired with textual descriptions by using verbatim quotes from the transcripts (Moustakas, 1994). The textual descriptions were reflected upon several times through *Imaginative Variation* in order to identify the structures or meanings of the phenomenon. The textual descriptions and structural meanings were integrated to complete a textual-structural depiction of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). After this, I constructed individual portraits of each participant that explicated their unique lived experience at the home. The portraits included a synthesis of my field notes and the analyzed interviews.

The above constituted my first phase of analysis. After the individual interviews were analyzed and the individual portraits were complete I then engaged in my second phase of analysis. During the second phase of analysis, I analyzed the portraits together using the aforementioned process. Thus, I gave each line of the portraits equal consideration and identified the meaning units. I then clustered the meaning units into themes and paired them with the textural and structural depictions. The end result was one universal depiction that explicated the shared experiences of all of the youth at the home that fit with the research questions. From the universal depiction, I analyzed the shared experiences of the youth to determine the seminal qualities, or essences, of the general lived experience. I extrapolated the important characteristics outlined by the youth that depicted their shared experience living in residential care. This constituted my third wave of analysis and the results of the analysis were used to frame the discussion chapter.

Trustworthiness

In order to ensure the results of the study reflect an authentic depiction of participants' lived experience I engaged in a series of management strategies to mitigate the risk of misconception. The remainder of this chapter will outline the strategies I employed to increase the trustworthiness of the study.

Credibility. Credibility within qualitative scholarship refers to the appropriate match between the result of the study and the realities of the participants (Patton, 2002). Thus, credibility is of paramount interest to the authenticity of the results in qualitative research. This study sought to achieve credibility by engaging in peer debriefing, progressive subjectivity, and member checks.

Peer debriefing. Creswell (2007) identifies peer debriefing as an external check that challenges the procedures that occur during the research process. Thus, peer debriefing involves a process of consulting with knowledgeable persons who are slightly removed from the direct procedures of the research. Throughout the course of the study I engaged in several periodic checks with my research supervisor and research committee. During these meetings we discussed the study as it unfolded, my assumptions and biases, and the emotions I was experiencing. Furthermore, the peer debriefs provided me with the necessary guidance to ensure that the data collection and analysis processes were conducted properly and in an empirical manner.

Progressive subjectivity. Progressive subjectivity intends to manage researcher bias by engaging in periodic journaling prior to and during the research process (Creswell, 2007). Wolff (2002) reports, “phenomenological research emphasizes the lived experience not only of the research participants but also that of the researcher” (p. 117). In addition, he asserts that grounded in phenomenology is self-reflexivity, a process that he defines as embodiment where the researcher is sensitive, self-aware, and confident. As such, I wrote about my own unique adolescent experiences, my assumptions about adolescent development, my unique position as a researcher including my background, position of power, sexual orientation, gender, age, and so on. It is proposed that periodically recording emergent ideas, their origins, and their impact on the study may be helpful at constructing a more credible investigation. Trussell (2010) reports that “critical reflexivity seeks to understand the personal, social and political aspects of the research process, and on the kinds of knowledge that is produced” and that “reflexivity becomes an important tool to demonstrate the validity or trustworthiness of the research” (p. 379).

Thus, I engaged regularly in reflexive journaling throughout the course of the research and used my entries as discussion pieces during my peer debriefing.

Member checking. Member checking is a strategy employed to assure the results of the study effectively capture the experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2007). Therefore, member checks engage the participants in the data analysis process by requesting their interpretation of the findings in order to assess if the findings are appropriate. My approach to member checking was two-fold. Primarily, I used the interviews as a forum to assess if my emergent ideas were grounded in the participants' experiences. As such, I periodically checked in with my participants during the interviews when I had an emergent idea and asked if my interpretations were correct. Secondly, I employed another member check with the participants after completing the individual portraits. Before engaging in the second member check, I asked if the participants were interested in meeting with me to discuss my interpretations and the findings of the study. Interested participants met with me privately to discuss their portrait and my analysis. Two of the six participants, one male and one female, reviewed their portrait and provided feedback. Only two youth participants were included in the member checking as the other youth had been discharged from the home. The youth who participated in the member checks claimed that their portraits portrayed a relatively accurate depiction of their experience at the home. However, the youth indicated that some of the central themes outlined in the portraits were less prevalent in their daily lives since some of the staff and residents were no longer working or living at the home. In these circumstances, slight modifications were made to the portraits to better represent the unique realities of the youth living at the home.

Prolonged engagement. As previously mentioned, throughout the course of the research I was present at the study site for multiple hours a week collecting field notes. During my time at the study site I strived to achieve an insider (emic) perspective of what the culture was like at the study site (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002).

Transferability. Transferability involves representing a phenomenon in a clear and descriptive manner through “thick descriptions” (Patton, 2002). As such, I included descriptive elements in my data collection and analysis (i.e., time, environment, and experience) in order to better contextualize the phenomenon. It is postulated that providing extensive and rich accounts to describe the phenomenon may increase the ability to transfer the results of the study to other contexts with similar qualities to those described in the study (Patton, 2002). Therefore, I achieved thick description by using the participants’ accounts and personal experiences to provide a comprehensive depiction of the phenomenon of interest.

Dependability. Qualitative research is inductive in nature as it includes emergent ideas in the study design. Consequentially, at various points of the investigation I was required to make modifications to the proposed methods. I recorded the modifications I made to the study in my research journal and included detailed accounts outlining the modifications and justifications for making the changes. Finally, these records were used to demonstrate transparency throughout the research process and they informed my dependability audit (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002).

Authenticity. Due to the subjective nature of qualitative research it is of paramount interest that the phenomenon under investigation is represented in a holistic

and authentic manner. Therefore, it is crucial that a variety of perspectives are included in the research in order to gain a full explanation of the phenomenon.

Fairness. In order to guarantee the results of the investigation provided an authentic depiction of the experiences of youth living in residential care I interviewed a variety of youth with diverse perspectives. As such, I strived to achieve a fair representation of the perspectives of youth residing in the residential care context by including all but one youth living at the home in the study. The results included a range of perspectives that outline similar and disparate experiences living at the home.

Ethical Considerations

Due to the sensitive nature of this research I encountered multiple ethical dilemmas throughout the course of the investigation. This section will address the strategies employed to manage the ethical considerations. As mentioned, prior to engaging with the participants, the investigation received approval from three separate REB boards. Beyond this, the strategies used to manage ethical considerations were informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity.

Informed consent. Prior to participating in the study each individual youth residing at the facility was invited to join me for a brief and informal presentation of the research project. As such, the anticipated benefits and risks, the right to withdraw, the role of a participant, researcher's right to disclosure, and the intended use of the results were reviewed (see appendix G). This information was conveyed verbally and each prospective participant was provided with a hard copy document (see appendix A, B, and G) outlining the investigation. At the end of the presentation the youth was asked if he/she would like to participate in the study. The interested youth were presented with an

information package and this was given to their guardians. The youth and their guardians were encouraged to review the information package and decide if they were still interested in participating in the study. The youth and their families were asked to return the forms to me, signed or unsigned, in a sealed envelope.

Confidentiality. Participation in this study involved disclosure of sensitive information relating to the lived experiences of youth living in a residential care context. Due to the complex nature of this investigation and the vulnerabilities of the participants confidentiality was a priority throughout the investigation. The Tri-Council policy statement (CIHR, NSERC, & SSHRC, 2010) reports, “the ethical duty of confidentiality includes obligations to protect information from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, loss, or theft” (p. 56). In order to attend to the duties of confidentiality, as outlined by the Tri-Council, information gathered during the investigation remained in a locked cabinet. Furthermore, electronic data was stored and safeguarded on my personal password-protected computers. Only Colleen Hood, PhD and myself were privy to the raw data. Any directly or indirectly identifying information (i.e., names, place of residence, date of birth) were modified and replaced with pseudonyms and/or coded. The consent forms (see appendix B) and information sheets (see appendix C) were kept separately in locked cabinets; all electronic and hard copy data will remain secured until five years after the completion of the study when it will be destroyed.

The right to confidentiality was balanced against heightened ethical circumstances. The participants were informed of my responsibility to disclose information relating to undue harm inflicted on them or others. As any breach of confidentiality would only

occur on a case-by-case basis and would be guided by consultation with my research committee and Brock University's REB (Tri-Council, 2010).

In addition, participant privacy was respected throughout the duration of the investigation in order to protect the participant's anonymity from the world at large. The Tri-Council policy statement asserts that participants must be provided with the discretion to exercise control over personal information. As such, participants must be presented with the option of "consenting to, or withholding consent for, the collection, use and/or disclosure of information" (p. 56). Thus, each participant was informed of his or her right to disclosure and was provided with a document outlining their rights (see appendix B). Furthermore, privacy was respected by managing information that included personal characteristics that might lead to identifying the participant. Therefore, identifying information (i.e., age, name, ethnicity, place of residence, geographic area, etc.) was modified, eliminated, or generalized to secure the privacy of the participant.

Chapter Four: Findings

The findings in this chapter will be presented in the form of individualized portraits that explicate the unique lived experiences of each youth participant. The decision to present the findings as portraits was based on Moustakas (1994) proposed method of analyzing phenomenological data. Moustakas (1994) asserts that data analysis should begin with providing a description of the essence of each participant's lived experience. Thus, the portraits consist of my first phase of analysis as they represent the unique experiences of each participant in the study. The portraits are primarily based on my observations at the home, the information shared in the interviews and the creative activities. To a lesser degree, the portraits incorporate my findings from the document analysis.

Backdrop: A Portrait of the Home

The home is a large recently renovated eight-bedroom bungalow situated in the middle of a low socio-economic community. The home's welcoming brick exterior and potted plants give the appearance of a typical family home within the community. The street on which the home is located is riddled with condemned shops as well as rundown apartments and homes. Additionally, the bulk of the city's services for marginalized groups (i.e., HIV/AIDS centre, Hep C clinic, community health services, community mental health, and food bank) are located on this same street. Consequently, the street has become a juncture for local prostitutes, drug users, and people who are homeless.

Intentions of the home. A local youth serving agency owns and operates the home in collaboration with Family and Children Services (FACS). All of the youth living

at the home are involved with FACS and are either in temporary care of the state or crown wards. Typically, the youth are admitted to the home under the pretense three-month contract that is periodically assessed to determine when the youth are prepared to transition elsewhere. The Ministry of Children and Youth Services funds the home and requires that the home comply with the strict guidelines set by the Ministry. The home is required to provide therapeutic groups that are specifically designed to diminish problematic behaviours and improve pro-social skills.

The level system. Central to the way in which the home operates is a level system that is similar to a token economy that rewards pro-social behaviour. The youth are assessed weekly, based on their behaviours, and receive a level from the stay that reflects their ability to follow the rules. The higher levels merit more reward, as such the youth can spend more time on the computers and video games; they can use the community access time; and they can have extended bedtimes. Whereas, the lower levels do not have access to computers and videogames; they cannot use their community access time; and they have an earlier bedtime.

Schedule at the home. A typical day at the home requires the youth to wake up at varying times between 6:00am and 7:50am in order to complete their morning routine and make it to school on time. Each morning the youth have to shower, eat breakfast, do their morning chores, and pack their bags for school. Many of the youth attend school in their former communities and since the home is located in a new area, many will share drives to school.

When the youth return from school – any time between 3:00pm and 4:00pm – the staff go through their bags to make sure that they do not have dangerous or contraband

items. After the youth are searched they are expected to go to their rooms for thirty minutes of quiet time. Once quiet time is complete they have approximately one to two hours of free time before supper begins. During their free time, the youth may have scheduled appointments with lawyers, therapists, counselors, and support workers that they must attend. Otherwise, they are free to spend their time as they please as long as they stay on the property. Supper is typically served at 5:30pm and the youth and staff will eat together in the dining. However, due to the lack of space at the table many of the staff will eat supper in the adjacent living room. After supper, the youth brush their teeth and complete their evening chores before they go for their evening quiet time, lasting another 30 minutes.

Once the youth have completed the evening quiet time they are required to attend therapeutic group, which typically begins at around 6:30pm or 7:00pm. The home is required to offer regular therapeutic programming that focuses on developing life skills and pro-social thinking, as set out by the Ministry. Daily therapeutic programs are scheduled at the home, and are listed below:

Monday: Skills Streaming

Tuesday: Physical Activity Night

Wednesday: Mental Health Awareness

Thursday: Room Blitz

Friday: Movie Night

The duration of the groups may vary anywhere from 15 minutes to two hours and they are usually facilitated by the staff. If it is Skills Streaming or Mental Health Awareness group the staff will read from a book that is appointed by the Ministry. Other groups, like

Physical Activity Night require the staff to take the youth into the community for a recreational activity.

Staffing patterns. The home employs four full time staff members that work on a rotating shift schedule. The home also employs a series of part time and casual/relief workers to supplement the hours not covered by the full time staff. There is also one house parent who works from 9-5 on the weekdays and her role is to prepare meals, buy groceries, and clean the house. There are typically two or three staff working at the home at any given time, making the ratio two to four youth for every one staff. The typical shifts include 7-3, 3-11, and 11-7 and as a result there is a constant flow of staff entering and leaving the building daily. The full time staff do not work the same shifts every week as they alternate shifts bi-weekly. Moreover, the casual and part-time employees work rather haphazardly picking up dropped shifts from the full time staff.

Table 1. Participant description.

Name	Gender	Age	Length of Stay	Ethnicity	Prior Living Arrangements	Leisure Interests
Leah	Female	16	4 months	Canadian	Mother and step-father	Friends, computer, painting, reading
Brad	Male	12	6 months	Canadian	Mother	Sports, fishing, computer
Mitch	Male	13	6 months	Canadian	Mother	Dirt biking, track & field, computer
Nat	Male	13	5 months	Canadian	Mother and step-father	Football, family, reading, history
Shawn	Male	14	6 months	Canadian	Grandmother	Skateboarding, biking, videogames
Trevor	Male	13	2 months	Jamaican	Mother	Sports, computer, videogames

Six youth participated in the study and the above table provides a depiction of some of the important characteristics of the youth participants. The ages and length of stay at the home varied and the youth also identified with multiple leisure interests.

Leah's Portrait

Leah is 16 years old and has been living at the home for five months. She has long, wavy hair that grazes her shoulders; however, it is typically kept out of her face in a high ponytail or bun. It is hard to determine the natural colour of Leah's hair although she claims that it is naturally auburn – a stark contrast from her current jet-black/blue hair. Leah values being unique and claims, *“I'm extra-unique, I don't follow any trends, I don't follow people, I do what I like, dress how I like, watch TV shows I like, I do what I want, I don't follow any trends.”* Perhaps her hair provides a space where she can express her uniqueness as she has changed the colour of her hair several times since her move to the home. Leah has a petite frame but the pressures of society to maintain a perfect body image are inescapable and she feels that she is not good enough or thin enough in society's eyes. Leah often comments on her body image and how she wishes that she were thinner. In an effort to keep face in a society that values thinness, Leah developed an eating disorder. She was caught by her mother subscribing to websites and blogs that provide advice and support for young girls interested in developing and nurturing an eating disorder.

Leah's move to the home was precipitated by repeated altercations with her mother, as she and her mom have not been getting along for several years. Due to the fighting, distance has grown between Leah and her mom and she states, *“My friends are more important to me than my mom because my mom sucks. I don't enjoy hanging out with [her] because she's cra-cra. She's loud and obnoxious.”* Leah's mother has a diagnosed mental illness and has been struggling with her mental illness for several years.

Leah sees her mom every other weekend, which has provided some physical distance to compliment the emotional distance that has been growing between the two of them.

Although the fighting played a major role in Leah's move to the home she also struggles with mental illness and her mental health played a part in the decision to move her to the home. Just before moving into the home Leah was admitted to an in-patient adolescent psychiatric facility where she stayed until she was stable enough to be moved. The decision to move Leah from the hospital to the home was primarily based on the fact that the home is a treatment facility that specializes in supporting young adults with mental illness. Since Leah's depression and anxiety have been relatively chronic for the past four years it was assumed that the home could provide her with the 24-hour support that she needs. As such, Leah was directly transferred from the psychiatric unit to the home. Although Leah was stabilized before her move she was not cured from her illness and continues to struggle. Leah's struggle with mental health is evidenced in her methods of coping. Leah has been cutting for four years and her arms and legs are covered in scars. Leah's scars are very noticeable, evidence of deep wounds and emotional pain, she wears cut up socks that cover her forearms with the hope that her scars will receive less attention. Leah's cutting has continued while living at the home.

Leah is not your typical youth living at the home for several reasons. Leah is older than the other youth – she recently celebrated her 16th birthday at the facility. In addition to this, she is the only girl and this is her first contact with Family and Children Services (FACS). Since this is Leah's first exposure to FACS she is currently going through the motions of signing her custody over to the province of Ontario. This requires Leah to meet several times with lawyers and social workers to finalize the decision to place her in

care. Lastly, Leah is the only youth living at the home that does not want to return to her family as reflected in her statement, *“I am staying here until I am 18 because I want to get an apartment on my own. I will cook what I want to cook, I will watch what I want to watch, of course I will have cats too. I will be a crazy cat lady.”* Leah is also unique in terms of her family composition; her parents are both well educated and have good jobs. Leah’s mother went to university and works as a social worker and her stepfather flies an airplane. Leah comes from an affluent family and has told stories about her stepfather taking her on trips in his personal plane and even allowing her to fly the plane.

Although Leah claims that she has no desire to live permanently with her mother she does miss her younger sister. Leah often talks about how she loves and misses her sister and how she wishes that she could see her sister more often. Leah captures the nature of her relationship with her sister in the following remark, *“I see [my sister] on home visits every other weekend; it sucks because I love her a lot but I don’t see her often. When we’re together we sit and cuddle and watch movies together.”* Leah’s sister was born with a rare disability and is unable to talk or walk. Leah has ribbons that support her sister’s disability in her room, keeps pictures of her sister with her, and writes about her sister in her blog. When describing her younger sister Leah claims, *“She gives me hope even though she’s little. She’s always so happy and she’s a prisoner in her body but she always smiles and laughs.”*

Leah’s move to the home has altered many aspects of her life; however, central to her experience at the home is feeling restricted and isolated. Leah describes the home as chaotic, violent, and unpredictable. Living at the home has constrained her ability to engage in meaningful activities and maintain contact with her supports in the community.

Living in a culture of violence. Leah describes the home as being a place that is fraught with physical and psychological violence. The violence at the home is rather systemic and she feels that this compromises her sense of self and safety. Leah describes how the violence at the home is inescapable and states, *“The kids living here can be really harsh and can make you feel bad about yourself. They are young and stupid and it hurts.”* Leah’s sentiment captures the implications of living in a culture of violence as hurtful comments influence how she sees herself. Importantly, it could be suggested that the negative commentary of her peers is especially problematic when considering Leah’s existing concerns about her own mental illness. Leah indicates that the staff do not manage the violence well and she believes that this contributes to the culture of violence at the home. Leah comments on how the staff police the violence at the home in the following sentiment,

The staff don’t really do much about it. I bring it to their attention and they don’t do anything about it. They sometimes tell me to stop complaining. I’ve experienced sexual harassment here, like [one kid] grabbed my boobs once, I’ve been threatened; had things thrown at me and hurt and staff do nothing but tell me to stop complaining. It makes me feel like they don’t care about us and that they’re just in it for the money.

Leah’s encounters with violence at the home encompass the full gamut and she reports that the staff fail to recognize the severity of the violence that is inflicted upon her. As a result, Leah is left feeling that she does not have anyone in her corner as she claims that she feels the staff members are only in it for the money. Thus, the culture, being a space that is rife with unaddressed violence, plays a role in suppressing Leah’s wellbeing.

Restrictive policies restricting wellbeing. In an effort to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the kids living at the home, many policies have been enacted that restrict access to the outside world. When describing the home and its policies Leah states,

There are a lot of rules and restrictions to what we can do. Like the computer, we can't go on Facebook or Tumblr. There are also restrictions around the friends we can hang out with. We can't have friends over and can only hang out with friends on community access and our community access is limited.

The benefits of the restrictive policies at the home are not transparent to Leah.

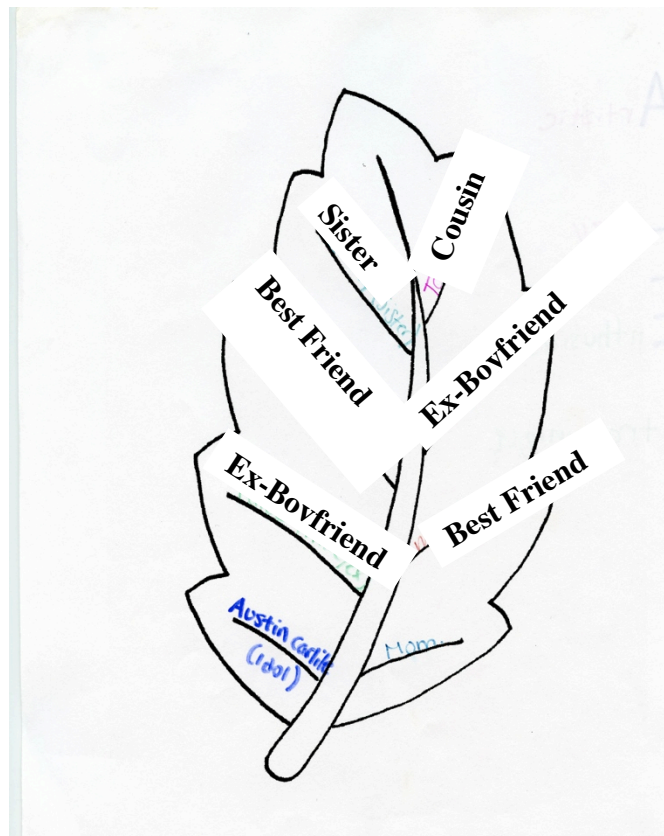
Adolescence is denoted as a period of expanding social worlds however this developmental trajectory is not reflected in Leah's experiences living at the home. Leah acknowledges that adolescence should be a time of social growth and notes that socialization is not fostered at the home,

Sixteen year olds should be able to be social, that's what sixteen year olds do. We are losing our social skills here because we don't have enough time to practice our social skills and you wonder why I am having anxiety and am scared to talk to people. I am isolated and I want to say these things to the staff but they don't listen.

Since her move to the home Leah has begun to lose contact with the important people in her life and she claims that the reciprocal relationships she once had are quickly deteriorating. Leah states, *"I feel trapped and out of the loop while I am here"* and there is nothing that she can do to change the policies that are currently in place. The policies at the home require Leah to stay on property and if she is permitted to leave the property she can only go for short periods of time, typically consisting of two-hour blocks. Leah notes

that keeping her away from the outside world perpetuates her avoidant tendencies and further complicates her social anxiety. Previous to moving to the home Leah relied on the mutual support from her friends to carry her through difficult and dark periods, she states, *“My friends are always there when I need them, they help support me.”* Although Leah has endured significant adversities in her youth she claims that her troubles were more manageable when in the company of her friends. Even though Leah’s friends have helped her through dark periods, in her mind, the policies at the home do not acknowledge the importance of social support in the form of friends. Leah is currently unable to lean on her friends to get through this difficult time. The policies have severed her connections to the outside world and she states, *“I feel honestly like I’m in a jail here, I feel isolated and hopeless, I feel like I can’t get better because they’re not providing the things I need to get better, like better connections with my friends.”*

In an activity where Leah was asked to report on the important people in her life she concluded that the following people are important to her:



Leah was able to complete the activity by indicating eight different people who are important to her. In Leah's list of important people she included three members of her family, two friends, two past romantic relationships, and the singer of her favourite band. Judging by these responses it can be suggested that Leah has the capacity to form meaningful relationships. Although Leah reports that these eight people are important to her she acknowledges that living at the home has constrained her ability to maintain contact with many of these people. Leah comments on her relationships with these important people in the following sentiments,

[Sarah], she is practically my sister but she's my cousin. We are the same age and grew up together; I have known her since I was born. I don't see her much since I came here and I didn't see her that much a little before I came here. I usually see her on the summers we used to spend all of our summers together. She lives in [this city, on a nearby street] and I see her on my community time, but not a lot.

I use to date [Billy] from March until April. We met at a concert in [this city] and we still talk because we have a lot of similar interests but we don't talk very much. He's 16 years old and lives in an apartment in [town]. He has a baby sister and she just turned one and she is so cute. I was talking on Skype with him when his mom's water broke and she went into delivery, it was really cool. I felt special, like I was there for something important.

[Dylan] has been my best friend since grade one, it's been a long time because I'm in grade eleven now. I moved schools a lot in grade school and stopped talking to him but we started talking again when I got Facebook. We don't see each other but we talk a lot.

It is important to note that Leah claims to have multiple important people in her life and that these people hold unique roles within her life. Although Leah classifies these people as being important she also reports that living at the home has compromised her ability to nurture these relationships.

One of Leah's biggest struggles with the policies at the home is how they have been developed with a "one size fits all" mentality. When commenting on the policies at the home her primary concern is how she is at a different developmental stage than her peers. Leah comments on how the policies do not meet her developmental needs in the following statement,

Rules for younger kids don't accommodate the needs of the older kids or people over the age of 15 or 16. We need different rules for different age groups. Like for the people here that are over the age of a kid like they should understand that friends mean a lot to people my age.

Leah feels that the older youth should be awarded more privileges and freedom; however, freedom at the home is a privilege and not a right. For Leah to be granted more time in the community she must demonstrate that she deserves more community time. As such, she must follow the rules and prove that she is responsible and able to handle herself in the community.

Leah acknowledges the limitations of relying exclusively on her supports available at the home and states, “*Sometimes when you’re going through a hard time like this you can’t always lean on the staff for support and they don’t help like friends do that you care about and love and who have been there for you your entire life.*” Thus, she identifies that certain people may be better suited to offer certain types of support and that restricting her support network to people at the home is unhelpful. The relative importance of receiving social support while living at the home is reflected in Leah’s sentiment,

Since we are in a place for mental health they shouldn’t keep us away from the people who we love and care about. We are already feeling isolated and this makes it worse. Sometimes staff can’t help us like our friends can, especially if you don’t get along with the staff on shift.

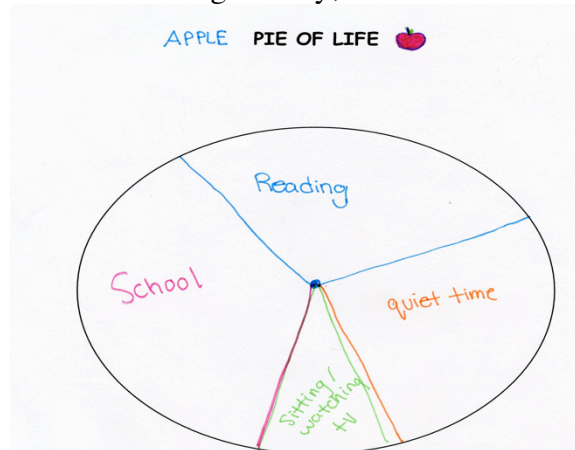
Thus, if Leah is not comfortable seeking counsel from the staff on shift she must rely on her peers at the home. Consequently, the restrictiveness of the home creates a sense of codependency between the youth living there, as interactions with the outside world are limited.

Contrived friendships: A case of proximity. Due to the fact that Leah’s community time is limited her ability to cultivate and maintain relationships with people outside of the home is constrained. As a result, Leah must resort to making friends with her housemates. Leah describes the home as “*A nice place; a comfortable environment [that] can be fun. You can make friends here with the other kids, just follow the rules and you’ll be okay.*” Although Leah is limited in terms of who she can befriend at the home, in that there are only seven people to choose from, she is somewhat selective with whom

she befriends. Since Leah is much older than the youth at the home she spends a lot of her time alone as she states, *“They’re too immature for me so I keep my distance. I don’t really interact with the people who live here.”*

Although Leah indicates that she spends a lot of her time in solitary activities, there have been instances where she developed friendships with some of the youth. Leah claims that she has developed strong friendships with youth at the home, especially those who are female, kind and respectful. Leah captures her relationships with some of her peers in the following sentiment, *“[One youth] me and her developed a friendship and she’s a really nice person, [I’m also friends with another youth] we’re good friends because they respect me, they’re not rude and we get along.”* It is important to note that the home is a relatively transient space and that many youth come and go rather systematically. As a result, Leah must prepare herself for the reality that friendships at the home may not be everlasting. Becoming close to people at the home is a relative risk because living at the home is not permanent. These friendships, although somewhat contrived, do not deviate from what a typical friendship would look like. Leah reports, *“We watch shows together, go to the store sometimes together, it depends on who’s working because we’re not supposed to leave on community time together but some staff let us.”* As such, the youth will spend their time together in friendly activities; however, the staff on shift must approve of these activities.

Leah completed the following activity, which describes a typical day in her life.



Based on her responses it is evident that Leah spends the majority of her time in solitary and sedentary activities. More importantly, Leah's participation in these activities has a direct impact on her emotions. Leah's emotional reactions to these activities will be described in greater detail below.

Interactions with staff: A place of inconsistency and authority. Leah captured in her earlier sentiment how her interactions with staff members are relatively inconsistent and that these inconsistencies have an impact on her experiences at the home. Leah claims, "*Some of the staff are nice and some are mean*" and since the home operates on a rotating schedule the dynamics at the home are hard to anticipate. It is important to note that the staff plays a central role in setting the tone of the home and this becomes complicated when they have different approaches to providing care for the youth. Leah indicates that the rules and expectations at the home vary based on the staff and reports, "*It is important to know the staff and what you can get away with. The staff aren't very consistent but I don't mind that because you can get away with some stuff.*" Thus, the staff regulate what Leah can or cannot do and as she develops an awareness of the staff she is able to alter her actions to meet their expectations. Therefore, Leah's experiences at the home are largely dependent on the people who work there.

Although Leah reports that she alters her behaviours to suit the expectations of the staff working at the home this is a relative risk on her part. Leah conveys how the staff typically discuss the behaviours of the youth and this has an impact on her experiences at the home. In addition to this, I have witnessed on several occasions the staff recording notes about the youths' behaviours and sharing this information with each other during meetings. As a result, it could be suggested that the grapevine speaks loud and clear at the

home and if a youth is caught not following the rules the news spreads rather quickly.

The impact of being caught not following the rules can be significant because the rules are to be followed. Leah recognizes that her relationships with staff largely depend on her ability to follow the rules and claims that the youth are often defined by their behaviours. The consequences of not following the rules may be significant and long lasting as Leah states,

Just follow the rules and it will be easy for you. Stay on the staff's good side and you'll be home free. If you want to get on the staff's good side you need to follow the rules, don't be rude, and don't manipulate people. If not you'll have a bad reputation because the staff know everything and they talk to each other. If you do something wrong and get labeled as a "bad kid" it sticks and it is hard to be successful if you are labeled as a "bad kid".

Leah reports that the staff members hold a certain level of power and that they are able to exercise their power if the youth do not follow the rules, especially by labeling them as bad kids. Furthermore, Leah feels that the staff often silences her and that she does not have much control over the ebb and flow of daily life. Leah comments on the power differentials at the home in the following sentiment, *"It's just kind of like their way or the highway. It's like you either do this or you're in your room."* This sentiment captures the power and control embodied by the staff and the repercussions that follow when the youth resist the authority of the staff.

The power differentials at the home become especially concerning when Leah needs support. As mentioned, Leah is restricted from seeking counsel from her friends in the community and is expected to rely on the staff at the home. The power imbalances

implicit in the youth-to-staff dynamic, at times, compromises Leah's ability to share openly and honestly. This dynamic becomes problematic when Leah does not have rapport with the staff on shift as she asserts, *"Sometimes staff can't help us like our friends can, especially if you don't get along with the staff on shift. We don't know these people, we're living with strangers here and sometimes I don't want to talk to them about my life problems."* Thus, the rapport that Leah has with the staff as a direct impact on her willingness to share about her problems.

Not only does the staff enforce the rules at the home, they also control some of Leah's recreation and leisure engagements. Leah does not have much control over the programmed activities at the home and she reports that sometimes the staff does not take her needs into consideration. This is particularly concerning when Leah misses out on participating in recreation as she states, *"They always pick the physical activity night and it's usually swimming and I hate it, it's disgusting, and they haven't noticed that I have OCD and never go but they don't care and if you don't go you get in trouble."* Although missing out on physical activity night is a concern, Leah's issues stem beyond her recreation participation. Leah feels that the staff do not recognize her mental health issues because they do not take her unique needs into consideration when programming activities. Leah's experiences with the programmed activities at the home are congruent with her sedentary lifestyle and her belief that the staff are just in it for the money. Leah's interactions with staff are not the only constraints that she faces when trying to participate in recreation as she is faced with a multiple constraining factors.

Constraints on leisure: Private problems with public consequences. One of the biggest constraints that Leah faces when accessing meaningful leisure experiences is

how the staff do not differentiate her from the other youth. As such, the faults of her peers are often projected onto her and Leah claims that she is frequently blamed for the wrong doings of others. Leah feels being accused by the staff is an unavoidable part of living at the home as states, *“The rules are ridiculous and don’t make sense. There may be one bad apple that gets in trouble but everybody gets punished. Like with Facebook, one kid got caught cyber bullying and now no one is allowed on Facebook.”* This sentiment captures the affinity of the youth living at the home. Leah describes the challenges that she faces when trying to maintain meaningful leisure engagements and the intersection with the other youth in the following remark,

One night all the kids were being violent and the staff were taking it out on everyone, even the kids who weren’t doing anything. One person makes a mistake and we all get in trouble. [Also], this one morning some of the kids were acting out and then everyone went down a level. Some of the staff weren’t here and didn’t see it so they assumed everyone did it and when we stood up for ourselves they didn’t listen.

Not only is Leah blamed and punished for the actions of others she is ignored by the staff when she tries to voice her concerns. Leah describes how she is typically perceived as guilty when things go wrong at the home, especially if the staff did not witness what occurred. As a result, Leah will be punished for the mistakes of others and her punishments typically restrict her leisure engagements.

In addition to this, Leah also encounters structural constraints to participating in leisure as she must find time for leisure within a busy schedule. Leah notes,

I am kind of limited in time to be able to sit and take time to do things like drawing. We have a busy schedule with groups, quiet time and planned activities that I can't really do the things I enjoy doing in my free time. Sometimes it gets annoying having all of the planned activities but oh well.

Thus, the schedule at the home does not take into account Leah's need for unstructured time to express herself. However, even if the schedule provided Leah with the necessary time for unstructured leisure this may not be enough to overcome her other barriers. Leah claims that the chaotic nature of the home constrains her ability to achieve the mindset necessary to take to her favoured leisure engagements. Therefore the actions of her peers have a direct impact on her leisure participation as she states, *"I am too distracted to paint here because I need things to be calm so I can focus and here it is too chaotic."* Even though Leah encounters multiple barriers to her leisure engagement she is still able to derive significant gratifications from these engagements.

Therapeutic leisure: Escaping the realities of daily life. Leah reports that leisure activities provide her with a space to experience positive emotion, escape her current situation, and mobilize her strengths. Leah claims that leisure provides her with brief interludes of positive emotion and states, *"I am the most content and most happy when I am doing these things. I find when I don't draw I have a nervous breakdown which is probably why I feel the way I feel now."* Leah claims that her art is central to her wellbeing and she relies on her leisure to get through difficult times. Although Leah reports that she uses her leisure purposefully to generate positivity, her access to leisure is constrained by the busy schedule and chaotic nature of the home. Despite these constraints, Leah reports that her leisure expressions provide her with a common thread

that connects her with her past and future during this time of transition. Leah reports, *“Since I was little I would draw and put a lot of detail into the things I drew”* and drawing is an activity that Leah has maintained throughout her transition to the home. Beyond this, Leah notes that her leisure provides a context where she can express her strengths by stating, *“I get a lot of compliments on the things I draw.”* Thus, drawing is an activity that is valued by Leah and the outside world and it provides a discursive space that addresses her talents. Leah also reports that blogging provides her with a valued social role that is respected by a larger community and indicates,

I have a blog to run and Tumblr is my life, people are relying on me to keep my blog running and I can't do that here. I like Tumblr because it's a place where I can say what's on my mind without getting judged. It's a place where I can say what's on my mind and it makes me feel calm.

Blogging is not the only therapeutic activity that is restricted at the home. Leah also uses her music to escape the outside world. Leah loves listening to scream-o music and her favourite band is Of Mice and Men. Leah often plays loud music in her room and asserts, *“Music makes me happy because there are so much words being said. Some music helps me to shut out the world.”* Although Leah comments on the therapeutic nature of listening to music this is not acknowledged by the staff. Leah reports that the staff do not allow her to keep her iPod and states, *“They take my iPod from me here and it kills me because I need it. They don't understand how important music is to me and my sanity.”* As a result, Leah faces barriers to accessing leisure activities with therapeutic value and consequently she is unable to derive certain benefits from these activities.

In the following activity Leah was asked to report on the aspects of her life that generate positivity and those that takes away from her positivity. The first glass is representative of the positive in her life and the second glass represents the aspects that interfere with her positivity.



Noteworthy, many of the things that Leah believes to generate positive emotion relates to her leisure expressions. Leah enjoys reading, art, music, and blogging on Tumblr. As mentioned, Leah claims that these engagements have therapeutic value as they allow her to escape reality and enter something positive. Leah captures the value of reading, one activity that generates positivity, in the following remark, *“Reading helps me escape because when I’m reading I’m the character and I am no longer living at this place. I am taken away to the places in my books.”* Even though Leah is aware that her leisure provides her with brief interludes of positivity and respite from her harsh reality she also notes that the policies at the home suppress her engagement in these positive experiences.

When commenting on the elements of her life that compromise her positive emotion Leah claims that a fundamental deterrent to her positivity is society. Leah captures the impact of society in the following statement, *“I hate society because it pressures me to be perfect and their judgments hurt.”* Beyond this, Leah struggles with the labels that she receives from people, including her caregivers. Leah describes the impact of being labeled and stigmatized in the following sentiment, *“Parents and doctors and staff here, they’re like oh you have a problem, here’s your label take these pills. That’s all they care about they don’t see me as a person they see me as my illness.”* Thus, Leah captures the impact of having a label on her identity and how the perspectives of others take away from her happiness. Lastly, Leah indicates that she does not enjoy going to school and she describes her relationship with her teachers and peers at school in the following statement,

My teachers probably see me as very distracted, smart but um what’s the word distracted. I’m sometimes social at school but not very social because of the people. I’m shy and I moved around a lot; I went to DM, Laura Secord, Crossly and back to Laura Secord. I moved between people mom, dad, mom, to here.

Leah claims that she dislikes going to school and attributes this to the transient nature of her early life, the people at her school, and her social anxiety. Leah captures the impact of her anxiety in the following sentiment, *“I’m scared of people; I have social anxiety.”* Due to her challenges with school I have observed Leah on multiple occasions too anxious to attend.

Identity development: The interplay between self and other. In the above statements Leah describes her feelings about how other people perceive her and

consequently this impacts her identity. Leah claims that she struggles with people who only see her for her illness, such as her parents, doctors, and the staff at the home. In addition to this she comments on society's pressures to be perfect and how this intersects with her self-concept. As such, Leah conveys how she feels inadequate in terms of society's expectations and how she feels the need to be thinner and perfect. Leah also reports that she dislikes the people at her school and their opinions about her. She describes the perspectives of others about her in the following statement, "*People who don't know me see me as quiet and shy but my friends see me as loud, hyper and outgoing.*" This suggests that Leah's identity is contextually bound and that her identities vary with the company she keeps. Leah believes that her sense of self is often influenced by others and captures the impact of her peers at the home on her identity in the following statement, "*The kids living here can be really harsh and can make you feel bad about yourself.*" Although her peers at the home are harsh and sometimes make her feel bad Leah notes that the staff see her differently. Leah comments on the staffs' perspectives in the following sentiment,

The staff sees me as very outspoken and as like the person that communicates what she wants. A strong person that tries to be happy no matter what, who is easy to get along with, and who is dedicated to the things she loves. They sort of said this to me like they say these things in my plan of care meetings and I'm like who me? And blush.

Leah describes how the perspectives of others are not divorced from who she is and consequentially this impacts her sense of self. Despite this, Leah also recognizes the weight of her own beliefs about herself.

When asked to comment on her identity Leah claims that she is artistic, sedentary, enthusiastic, and unique. Leah comments on these qualities in the following sentiment, *“My laziness, I don’t know I get a lot of people to do things for me and I was never involved in sports. I like to sit and play video games and the computer, I love being on the computer. I am very much a gamer.”* Thus, Leah has come to understand herself in light of the groups that she is excluded from, such as sports. Moreover, she has also come to understand herself through the sedentary activities she participates in, such as gaming. In addition to being sedentary, Leah reports, *“I am enthusiastic, when I talk about things I enjoy I am loud, spontaneous, crazy and outspoken. I am very passionate about the things I love.”* Leah also describes herself as being independent, shy, and anxious. Although she describes herself as being shy and anxious she also recognizes that these identities are not as prevalent when she is with her friends. Leah describes her identity with her friends in the following sentiment,

I am a loyal person and my friends and family mean everything to me. I’m a good listener and I’m good with advice; I’m usually friendly but if you get on my bad side it’s not pretty. I try to get along with everybody; I don’t exclude people; I don’t believe in groups like the popular kids and the losers, I like to focus on the individual. I’m a nerd myself and I hang out with anyone because it’s the person not the group.

Leah portrays that her connections with the outside world, including her friends and the activities she is affiliated with, have influenced her developing identity. In the following activity Leah was asked to chart her leisure participation and how this impacts her identity.

Past	Present	Future
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Playing soccer - Spending time with family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School - Long distance running 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marathon running - Travel
Past	Present	Future
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - painting - hanging out with friends - drawing more often - cooking - visiting family - reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - computer - reading - drawing - texting - eating - t.v. - sleeping - writing no time to friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - working - computer - writing novels * seeing friends a lot more

In this activity Leah indicates that a few of her leisure interests have carried over into her current life at the home. As such, it can be suggested that these activities have provided a common thread throughout the transitions in Leah's life. For example, Leah claims that her interest in drawing, albeit occurring less now, has been a consistent activity throughout her transition to the home. Beyond this, Leah reports that reading was an important engagement of her past and that she continues to read while living at the home. Importantly, Leah aspires to write novels in the future thus maintaining her passion for literature and nurturing it into something more.

It is noteworthy that Leah's interactions with her friends and family have reduced considerably since her move to the home. Leah's severed connections with the outside

world are reflected in the activity as she reports that her prior involvement with friends and family has ceased with her move to the home. Leah's yearning for friendship is further emphasized in the activity as she acknowledges that spending time with friends was an important part of her past and something that she looks forward to in the future. Furthermore, Leah's desire for friendships is not congruent with her earlier responses in the leaf activity where she identified with having multiple friendships. However, this reality coincides with her earlier sentiments about being restricted from her friends and family and feeling isolated.

In summary, Leah's story living at the home depicts the multiple tensions that she faces. Primarily, it is clear that Leah is socially motivated yet that she faces several barriers when trying to connect with others. Consequently, Leah is forced to develop friendships with her peers at the home, even though these interactions are riddled with bullying and violence. Leah discusses the integral role that leisure plays in her identity and happiness yet she conveys that the policies limit her ability to freely express herself in leisure. As such, she is required to engage in activities that are accessible within the home or activities that are prescribed by the staff and these may not reflect her interests. Finally, Leah described the impact that living at the home has on her developing identity. In her narrative, she conveys how she is segregated and disengaged from several activities in the community. Moreover, she shares stories about the stigma that she encounters while living at the home. The experiences outlined by Leah may have a significant impact on her sense of self and could result in her developing an institutionalized identity.

Brad's Portrait

Brad moved to the home seven months ago, however, this was not his first experience living in residential care. Although Brad is only 12 years old he has spent a large portion of his life living in different residential care facilities in the region. Brad comes from a single parent family where he lived with his mother and two younger brothers. Brad's mother works in the fast food industry and relies exclusively on her single income to support her family. Before Brad moved to the home he was living in a nearby city with his mother and brothers. Although Brad comes from a family with little financial means, his mother has been able to support his involvement in organized sports as he reports formerly playing on an organized ice hockey, ball hockey, and football team. When commenting on his involvement in sport, Brad reports that his mother played an influential role in his participation and states, *"My mom just said you're signing up whether you like it or not and I liked it."* Brad was moved to the home with the hope that living there would address his violent and prejudicial tendencies. Brad struggles with managing his anger and he struggles with respecting women, people of different cultural backgrounds, and people of diverse sexual preferences. Even though Brad was placed at the home to improve his aggression he feels that living there is counterproductive and states, *"Living at the home makes me more angry at everybody, it just makes me more mad."* Brad's story living at the home is one of anger, self-improvement, and missing his family.

Living at the home: A place of hostility and chaos. Brad describes the home as being a place that is hectic and loud and states, *"It's loud, very loud, yeah it's just loud and crazy."* Although Brad is not inexperienced in terms of living in residential care he

notes that the dynamics at this home are relatively unique and foreign to him. When commenting on the dynamics at the home Brad states, *"It sort of bothers me because I'm not use to that, I'm not use to the craziness, the yelling I'm sort of use to."* Brad claims that this home is a lot more chaotic than the other homes where he has lived and states, *"Do you ever go to [the other home] You should do another assignment on that one because between here and there, that one it's way different because there's more kids and it's more calm, yeah surprisingly."* Brad reports that his prior experiences living in another residential care facility were calmer, even though the home housed a larger number of youth. While at the home, Brad struggles with the chaos and often gets in arguments with his peers when the dynamics have escalated. When discussing his arguments at the home he reports that the fighting is relatively inescapable because he is not allowed to leave the property. Since Brad is unable to leave the property of the home, he will sequester away in his room or face the hostilities of the group. Brad's interpersonal struggles are captured in the following remark,

Let us have more community - like no matter what level we're on - to have more community access or let us use our community access because if we're allowed to use it then we would be able to go out in the community when we're mad and just like take a break out there instead of taking a break all cooped up.

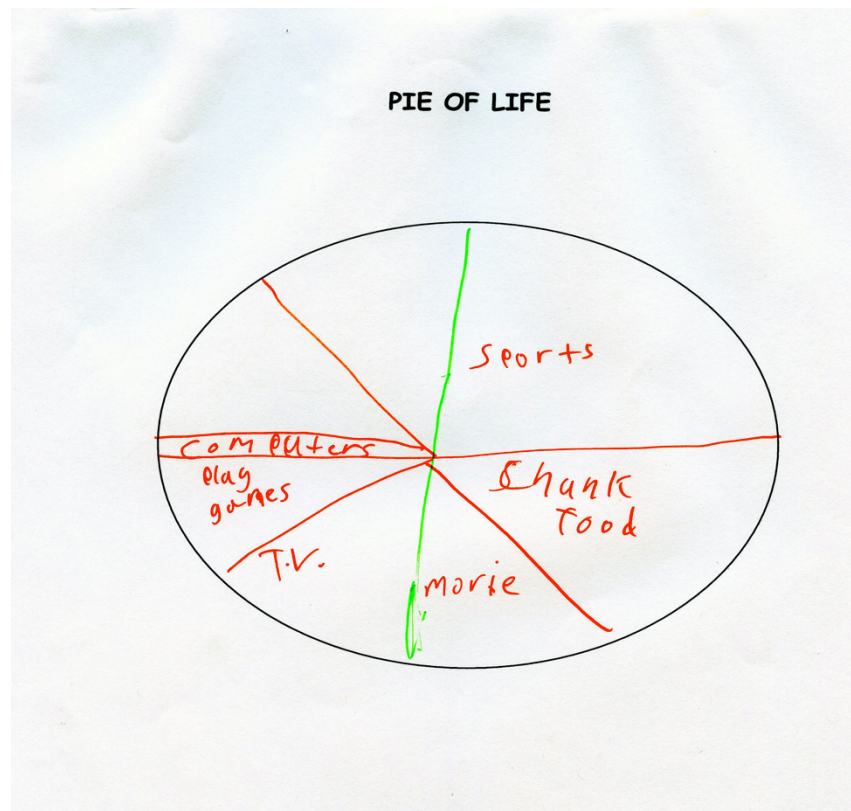
Not being permitted to leave the home at times disrupts Brad's desire for betterment because he is unable to escape the things that trigger him. When Brad is upset he often reacts in destructive ways and he will resort to punching holes in walls, flipping couches, and throwing chairs and other objects at staff and youth. Brad claims, *"When I'm mad it makes me feel like a monster."*

Shifting focus toward betterment. Central to Brad's experience at the home is focusing on self-improvement and returning to his family. Brad recognizes the importance of working toward improving himself and states, "*Just work hard cause if someone's using their talent to control their anger, hard work beats talent. If you have talent and hard work, if you work hard and have talent then that is, I don't know.*" This change in perspective impacts almost all aspects of his life as he states,

Some of the things we do here is go outside, play basketball if it's nice out or uh just like draw, play Uno, play any cards, watch TV and just hang out and when I think about when I'm here it's just how can I improve myself to make a better life for everybody instead of just myself.

The notion of self-improvement dominates many aspects of Brad's life as he claims to alter his leisure experiences to suit his goal for betterment. As such, Brad is purposeful and strategic during his free time as he is committed to making a better life for himself and others.

In the following activity, Brad was asked to report on how he spends his time at the home.



Here, Brad reports that he spends his time playing sports, watching television and movies, playing games, spending time on the computer, and eating junk food. Brad describes these activities in the following statement, *“Sports, we do a lot as you see we play basketball and all that, junk food we get every Friday night so that’s about every week; so movies we watch almost every day; TV every day; play videogames sometimes; computers never, not anymore.”* Even though Brad was able to record multiple engagements he left two blocks of time unaccounted for and stated that he could not think of anything to fill the remaining blocks of time. In the activity, Brad stressed the importance of sports in his daily life at the home, *“I’m gonna start off with what I do the most um sports.”* When Brad is at the home he spends the majority of his time playing basketball in the backyard with his peers and the staff, when weather permits. Brad notes that playing videogames and the computer are the activities that he engages in the least and states, *“The least thing I do is uh crap um play videogames um computers uh that’s gonna be the least actually.”* At the time of the activity Brad and his peers were punished for acting out and the use of computers and videogames were restricted at the home. The implications of not having access to videogames and the computer is stressed in a later activity where Brad reports that prohibiting his access to these engagements causes him to be unhappy.

Brad reports that he shifts his focus toward improving himself when engaging in certain activities at the home but he also acknowledges that living at the home tests his ability to manage his aggression. Brad reports that his peers and staff often “set him up” for failure yet he also claims that the home has provided him with the necessary supports to improve. Brad’s contradictory perspectives about the home are captured in the

following sentiments, “[*The staff*], they help us get through it and are just like come on you can do it like they help us achieve our goals.” Brad continues comments on the staff and his progress in the following statement,

It helps - it will help you because they have great staff. They will help you and if you've got any questions you can go to the office and say I've got a question and they'll answer your question. There's not one question about the [home] that they cannot answer.

Brad claims to benefit from the staffs’ support and states, “*When like they treat us - like when we freak out - and they leave us alone, they don’t like try to be bossy, they leave us alone and let us relax in our rooms, even though I don’t like it, it’s helpful. They help us with everything.*” Thus, Brad reports that the support he receives from the staff at the home is beneficial, even though he may not appreciate it in the moment.

Brad’s road to betterment has not been linear as his progress is easily detracted by the peer dynamics at the home. Brad indicates that it is imperative to refrain from participating in activities that break the rules because this can complicate the return home. Brad reports that his progress has been compromised by his peers as states, “*Don’t get bothered by the other kids, just pay attention to what you have to do to get out of here because I got caught up in everything so I got here longer. Just stick with the people who you think is right.*” For Brad, living at the home is a process of negotiation where he must balance how he interacts with his peers with his goal to return home. Thus, he acknowledges that self-improvement does not happen in isolation from his peers. Brad describes the interconnection between him and his peers and how this intersects with his self-improvement,

Especially people that have more problems than you, instead of like you trying to do your best to get out of some place and try to make a better life for yourself, instead of doing that - and you get bullied and you're not making a life better for yourself you're making heck for everybody. People need to learn how to make other people's life better as same with your own and that's what I try to do.

Even though Brad's stay at the home has been elongated he is still able to make note of his improvements. Brad claims that the home has helped foster his growth and this has resulted in him viewing himself differently, *"I've come a long way; I use to freak out and punch holes through walls. It makes me see myself as a different person, as a happier kid, as a more calmer, less destructive kid that anyone would ever meet."* Brad's perceived progress is in part motivated by his desire to leave the home, as evidenced in his statement, *"Just focus on what you have to do to get out of here."* In Brad's mind, progress is directly linked to seeing his family and this perpetuates his drive for betterment. Brad comments on his desire to see his family in the following statement, *"I miss my mom. They should let us see our parents more instead of being like oh you get to see your parents once a week because they can't stop us from seeing our parents."* He continues to state, *"Never bring your kids here."*

Living at the home: Perpetuating a cycle of violence. Although the home is intended to be a place where violence is minimized Brad reports that it is a space where violence is commonly experienced with minimal consequence. Interactions between the youth are often laden with violence and Brad asserts, *"Some of the kids they just bully and bully, they just bully me until basically I'm dead."* This sentiment captures how the bullying at the home is relatively chronic and unavoidable. Despite the pain that Brad

feels when he is bullied he often bullies the other youth. Brad typically plays a central role in the bullying at the home. He struggles to refrain from making derogatory comments toward the staff and youth and his discourse is often riddled with homophobic, racist, and sexist terms. After making offensive comments Brad will laugh thinking that what he said was funny. In addition to this, Brad will act out physically toward the other youth and he will punch, kick, or throw things at them. As a result, many of the youth at the home have endured a physical altercation with Brad.

Brad feels that he is a frequent target of the bullying at the home and this makes him feel “*hated and disliked*”. The impact of the violence at the home is amplified by the past experiences of Brad, as evidenced in the following quote,

It just like hurts my feelings and like how people I think are my friends and the next minute they're bullying me or my other friends and then that just makes me really angry when people bully my friends and bully me. I have been bullied my whole life and I still try to get rid of it but I never will, it stays with you your whole life.

Brad describes the unique dynamics at the home where friends coexist with bullies.

Furthermore, he reports that he has been a target of bullying throughout his life and feels hopeless that the bullying will ever end.

The violence at the home is problematic because it occurs at a systemic level. Brad indicates that the bullying typically goes unaddressed and states, “*There's lots of [bullying] and the staff don't do crap.*” Furthermore, Brad claims that sometimes the staff will participate in the violence as they will taunt him and set him up. Brad captures the staffs' involvement in the bullying in the following sentiment, “*There's always one*

kid in the bunch or adult in the bunch that starts crap and that one adult in the bunch happens to work here.” Brad reports that he typically starts his mornings by being set up by a staff member and states, *“It’s the same worker and he always sets me up.”* Brad claims that his early morning hours are the worst hours in his day and this is because of the staff at the home. Brad’s morning routine typically begins with an argument with the staff on shift. Although the cause of these arguments may be inconsequential in terms of the bigger picture, Brad is often punished and starts his day off poorly. Brad captures a typical morning in the following sentiment,

I woke up a little early and had my shower and the guy gave me ten minutes in my room for having a shower early. Ten minutes in my room for having a freaking shower early like that's bull and I'm gonna make sure that guy gets fired, it's either if I have to sue him, charge him.

The implication of staff intimidating youth is much different than the youth intimidating each other as the staff have an unfair advantage. Brad acknowledges the power differential between him and the staff as he claims to feel powerless when arguing with staff. Brad comments on his relationships with some of the staff in the following statement,

Just like how they deal with the other kids. Like sometimes they treat the other kids more better than like me or anyone else. They treat everybody differently, sometimes like when they're freaking out they're like go to your room, go there, go this, like they demand, they don't say please can you go to your room, stuff like that which I hate, it just bothers me a lot. I wish they would treat us better; treat us like kings or queens or whatever, just treat us a lot better.

Brad describes the power imbalances at the home and how he feels that the actions of staff are unfair and impolite. Moreover, he claims that the manner in which the staff exert their authority over him alters his relationships with them and states, *“Staff, they’re just so bossy. I hate their guts.”*

Violence is not only expressed through Brad’s interactions at the home as he indicates that recreation and leisure, both inside and outside of the home, often provide a space for tolerable violence. As such, Brad typically uses his leisure expressions as a method to express his anger.

Using leisure to express aggression. Brad describes himself as someone who is athletic and someone who loves sports. Brad describes his passion for sports in the following sentiment, *“I just play sports, sports, sports.”* For Brad, sport provides him with a context where he can express his talents; however, his options for sport participation are limited while at the home. When Brad is at the home he does not have the equipment necessary to participate in his favourite sports like ball hockey and fishing and states, *“I can’t fish because there’s nowhere to fish and they don’t got fishing rods.”* Furthermore, a lot of the equipment at the home is broken and thus he is limited to playing basketball in the backyard, sometimes even playing with airless balls. Brad reports that he does not like basketball but he plays it because it is his only option. As a result, Brad spends the bulk of his free time playing basketball in the backyard with the staff and youth.

Sports provide a seemingly appropriate space for Brad to express his anger and he states, *“They [sports] help me a lot and I think most people should get into a contact sport they’ll get their anger out like it helped me a lot.”* Additionally, Brad reports that

his sport participation serves a utilitarian role in his life and states, *“Sports waste my anger, they waste my anger and help me focus.”* Brad typically takes his violence out on the court and has given his peers bloody noses because he is an overly aggressive player. Brad’s aggressiveness in sport has become a significant issue as he was recently kicked out of an organized ball hockey league for his aggression. Brad was caught taking slap shots at his teammates and yelling profanities at his coach and this resulted in him being removed from the league. Brad reports that he had a difficult time playing in the ball hockey league because his teammates knew that he was living at the home and this caused them to altered the way they interacted with him. Brad reports that his teammates treated him poorly when they found out that he was living at the home and states, *“The treated me like a bitch, they didn’t pass to me, nothing, just kept it away from me so I took it away from them.”* Furthermore, Brad felt that when his coach found out where he was living, he too altered his interactions and states, *“My hockey coach, he saw me as nice but at the same time he kept his eye on me the whole time.”* Organized sports for Brad became a constant reminder of his current situation and how is different from his teammates. As a result, the sport context became a space where he was stigmatized and excluded because of living at the home.

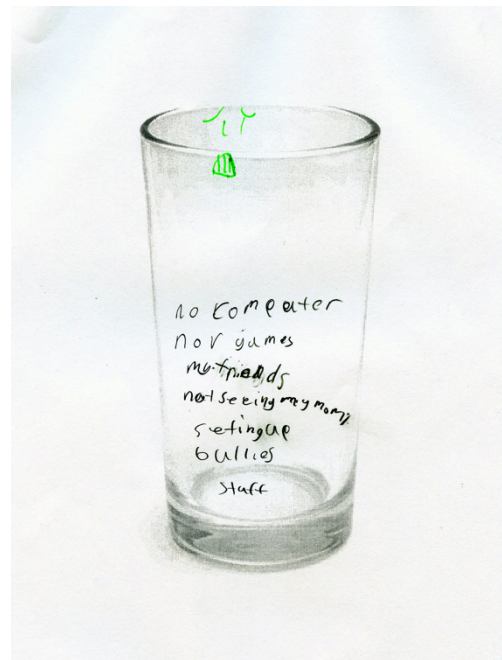
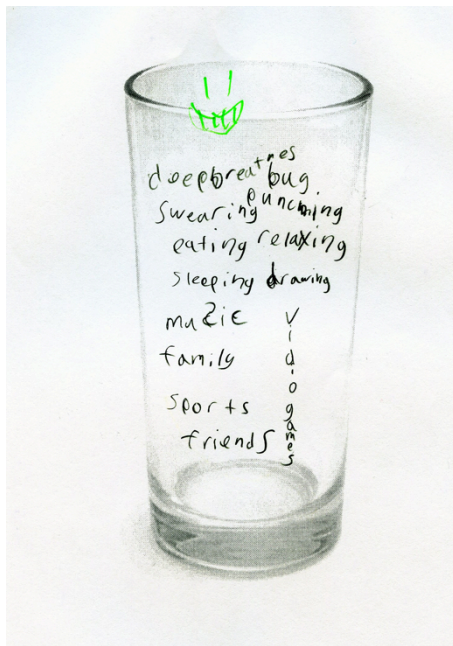
Brad also describes past violent acts in organized sport and states, *“Sports take my anger out, I get to hit people like one time I facemasked somebody because I was pissed off at them I grabbed their facemask and threw him right into the mud.”* Since Brad was kicked out of his ball hockey league he only participates in sports at the home. Although Brad’s sport participation is under the direct supervision of the staff at the home he still uses it as a space to inflict harm onto others. The home is located near a

large park and sometimes the staff will take the youth there to play football. Football is one of Brad's favourite sports and he shares a recent experience playing football with his peers at the home,

Yesterday I went to go play football on the field, what a way to get your anger out, I got my anger out because I beat the crap out of [a youth at the home] yeah literally I ran up to him, pushed him down, punched him across the head and kicked him in the back of the leg. [The staff did] nothing, they hate [him] [he's] such a brat.

Sport is not the only leisure activity where Brad is able to express his anger as he reports that he enjoys playing violent videogames because they allow him to act out in ways he is unable to in reality. Brad asserts, "*Videogames take out my anger again because I like playing UFC Undefeated 3.*" Brad's fascination with violence is evidenced in his leisure choices as he selects to participate in contact sports and violent videogames during his free time.

Realizing the constraints of living at the home. Due to the recent behaviours of the youth living at the home Brad cannot play computer games or videogames. Brad indicates that he feels "*horrible and bored*" at the home because of all of the limitations. Thus, the activities that are available at the home have a direct correlation to his emotions. Brad comments on the aspects of his life that generate happiness and unhappiness in the following activity. The first glass represents the aspects of his life that cause him happiness and the second glass represents the aspects of his life that make him unhappy.



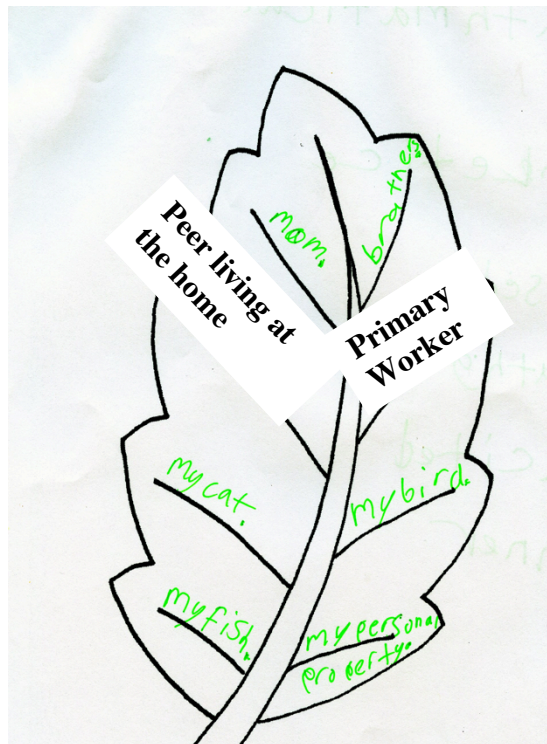
When describing the aspects of his life that generates positive emotion Brad describes how his ability to exercise his aggression leads to him feeling happy. Brad reports that swearing, punching, sports, and videogames all contribute to his happiness. The correlation between Brad's happiness and ability to express his anger is evidenced in his statement, *"Sports takes my anger out. I get to hit people."* In addition to this, Brad reports that he is happy when he swears and states, *"Swearing, I just like swearing because it gets my anger out instead of beating people up."* Thus, the ability for Brad to express his anger in sports, videogames and swearing leads to feelings of positivity in the aftermath. In addition to the aggressive activities that lead to his happiness, Brad acknowledges the importance of friends and family in contributing to his positivity and states, *"Family are just the people I love and friends are the people I get along with."* Moreover, he recognizes the therapeutic nature of activities such as deep breathing, sleeping, and relaxing and he associated these activities with regulating his emotions and states, *"They help calm me down."*

In terms of the activities that constrain his happiness, Brad makes note of the restrictiveness of the home and how he is prohibited from playing videogames and the computer. Thus, the home limits access to some of the activities that generate positive emotion for Brad and this leads to him feeling unhappy. Brad comments on the impact of these restrictions on his happiness, *“Computers like I said about the other one it takes my anger out and stuff.”* Thus, by restricting his access to these activities he is unable to express his anger in ways that lead to happiness in the aftermath. Beyond being restricted from certain activities that generate positivity, Brad indicates that staff, bullies, and not seeing his friends and mom make him unhappy.

Although Brad reports that the home restricts his access to activities that generate positivity he has found creative ways to spend his time, for example playing basketball in the backyard. Despite finding alternative leisure interests that generate positivity, Brad is unable to engage in many of his past positive activities. Brad stresses the impact of the restrictiveness of the home in the following sentiment, *“I don’t get to go out into the community and that’s what I like to do, just skateboard, scooter everywhere, that’s what I do, that’s my thing and I can’t do that here because there’s not enough room to do that in the backyard.”* Thus, many of Brad’s leisure engagements have been suppressed since his move and consequently he is unable to participate in the activities that he once identified with. Brad indicates that he wishes he had a voice at the home so he could express his opinion with the hope that it would change some of the rules and restrictions. Brad comments on his desire to have a voice in the following statement, *“They just like don’t let me go out or use my free time; I hate it, it’s bull. I want to be able to express my opinions.”*

In addition to this, Brad's move to the home has severed many of his ties with his friends as he states, *"I've got no friends right now, just [one of my housemates]."* Brad recently switched schools and now attends a school-based program offered by the agency that owns the home. As a result, Brad is left feeling isolated from his former friends and he is forced to befriend the youth at the home. Since Brad is living in a new community he does not get to see his friends as much as he did previously and states, *"Yeah because I never get to see them [friends]. Sometimes when I say, hey wanna come hang out and they're just hanging out with their other friends and not like answering e-mails, calls, every time I call them just makes them think that I'm ignoring them I think."* Brad recognizes that the world back home continues even though he is not physically there and he struggles to maintain his friendships. Thus, Brad must develop new leisure interests with new leisure companions while he is living at the home.

In the following activity Brad was asked to report on the important people in his life. He was asked to use the veins of the leaf to record the people in his life who he feels are important. After identifying the important people in his life, he was asked to describe his relationship with each person. Below are Brad's recordings of the important people in his life.



Brad struggled to complete the activity and requested for modifications to be made so that he could include animals and objects. Brad's inability to complete the activity without modification could suggest that he has limited meaningful relationships and that he does not have many important people in his life. Brad reports that his mother and brothers are the most important people to him and states, "*[I see them] every weekend. We sometimes go swimming or to the beach and sometimes we get to go like go for walks, go across the street from our house and play basketball, go hang out with my brothers at the playground and just relax.*"

Beyond his family, Brad only made note of people who are either living or working at the home. Brad's inability to identify important people outside of the home might suggest that living at the home has diluted his relationships with the outside world. When commenting on his friendships Brad states, "*I've got no friends right now.*" Brad reports that his only friend is a peer at the home and states,

*[I see him] whenever he's here which is often but not that often sort of thing.
[He's important] because I've known him since I moved here and me and him just helped each other get through everything and just stick together and we're best friends. [We] go on the computer and play on RoBlox and sometimes we play basketball.*

Thus, Brad's limited exposure to the outside world while living at the home may inhibit his ability to maintain connections with important people outside of the home. Although Brad reports not having any friends, his friendship with a peer at the home has provided him leisure companionship and a support system while he is at the home.

In addition to his peer at the home, Brad also acknowledges that his primary worker is important to him. Brad comments on his relationship with his primary worker in the following sentiment, *“Well because she's my PW and she's like she's helped me a lot since I got here and she's been helping me all the way through it. [We don't do much together] because she's working and she has too much stuff going on.”* Brad was unable to identify shared leisure experiences with his primary worker and claims that this is due to her responsibilities while at work. Moreover, Brad's primary worker has been off work for several months as she is changing jobs. Despite her absence at the home Brad still identifies her as being a valuable person in his life. The importance of Brad's primary worker, and her absence at the home, may speak to his detachment from the outside world.

Finally, Brad reports that his personal property, fish, bird, and cat are all important to him. The importance that Brad attributes to his animals could speak to his lack of meaningful ties to people. Although Brad struggled to complete the activity he later reported that his teacher is an important person in his life and states,

Today was the best day because [the morning staff] he wasn't being as rude, he didn't speak to me until when I left and he decided to take my stereo away and no one touches my stereo, neva. But it was a good day because my teacher is gonna come work here, you're gonna meet my teacher, if you come Tuesday morning or anytime during the day like come at like twelve and spend quite a bit of time here, just hang out, and then you'll meet my teacher on Tuesday. He's the best.

Understanding self: The role of leisure and the home. When asked to describe himself, Brad reports that he is an athletic person who is trustworthy and excitable. Brad comments on these attributes in the following sentiment,

I'm athletic because I play lots of sports. I'm also a winner because basically I win at everything because yesterday I shot a basketball from the other side of the playground and got it in the basketball net; it should have been a ten pointer. [I am also] trusted because people trust me; healthy because I eat good food; excited because I'm always excited for everything.

Brad reports that seminal to who he is as a person is being athletic. As such, he reports that athleticism is a valued part of his identity. Although Brad defines himself by his sport participation he acknowledges that his ability to participate in sports has been constrained with his move to the home. Thus, Brad is unable to express himself in ways that he once did when he was living with his family.

Although Brad is able to identify many valuable qualities that define him he also notes that others may have a different perspective about him. Brad believes that he is annoying and states, *"I'm annoying because I really am annoying."* When probed about how he came to this belief he reports that he is told he is annoying by staff, peers, and his mother. Therefore, the comments and perspectives of others have a bearing on how Brad sees himself. The relative influence of the opinions of others on Brad's identity is also evidenced in the violent discourses at the home as he states, *"[Other people would describe me as] a douche. Everybody say it because they all think I am. [One youth], he says I am; he said it to my face."* As a result, Brad reports that he often feels *"Hated and disliked"* by his peers at the home. In addition to this, Brad reports that when his peers

outside of the home find out about his living situation they change their perceptions of him as he states, *"They treated me like a bitch."*

In the following activity Brad was asked to record his leisure interests across time. Interestingly, many of Brad's responses are reflective of his described identities.

Past	Present	Future
- Playing soccer - Spending time with family	- School - Long distance running	- Marathon running - Travel

Past	Present	Future
annoying people play football	play sports play on the computer	go to Florida fish play computer

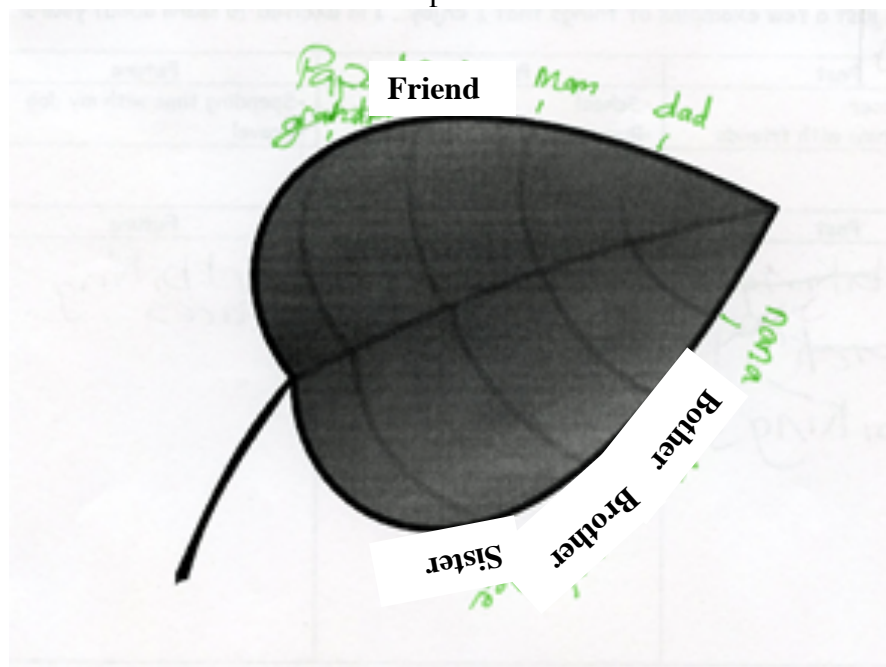
Brad reports that in the past he played football and annoyed people, two qualities that he feels are integral to his identity. Beyond this, Brad reports that he continues to play sports, and that he is an athletic person. In the future Brad aspires to return to fishing, travel to Florida and play the computer.

Brad's move to the home has impacted his self-concept in that he acknowledges that he needs to improve himself. Brad reports that he needs to "work hard" to better himself and control his anger. Thus, it can be suggested that Brad's placement at the home has prompted him to think that who he was coming into the home is bad and that he needs to be fixed. As a result, Brad is making a conscious effort to change his identity to reflect something improved as he states, *"when I think about when I'm here it's just how can I improve myself."*

In summary, Brad acknowledges the impact that living at the home has on his identity and leisure as he reports that the home has caused him to focus on improving himself. Consequently, Brad has altered his leisure interests to demonstrate his improvements and acknowledges how his personal triumphs impact his self-concept.. Although living at the home has prompted Brad to improve, he makes reference to some contradictory messages. Although Brad conveys that he has altered his leisure to capture his improvements he also claims to use leisure as a context to express violence and aggression. In addition to this, Brad describes the violent nature of the home and how he is often the victim yet negates to address his involvement in the bullying at the home. Lastly, he shares unique tensions that he has with the staff as he conveys that they play an important role in his development yet also claims that that they set him up for failure.

Mitch's Portrait

Mitch recently celebrated his 13th birthday and seven month anniversary of living at the home. Before coming to the home Mitch was living with his mother in a distant town. Mitch did not share information about why he was placed at the home. However, he spoke about his family's financial troubles and how they struggled to purchase food and clothes. Beyond this Mitch states, *"Uh yeah well I had to move for just a few months because there's something going on at my house."* Mitch's parents are separated and as a result he does not see his father often. Mitch has two brothers, one older and one younger, and an older sister whom he lived with prior to moving to the home. Mitch does not get along well with his brothers and states, *"I don't really like my brothers, they're very annoying, but my sister I like her."* Mitch's younger brother has autism and although Mitch does not always get along with him he recognizes his responsibilities as an older brother, *"My little brother even though I don't care about him sometimes I will if he's in trouble."* Despite some of his conflicts with his brothers, Mitch acknowledges the importance of family and reports that the members of his family are the most important people in his life. In the following activity Mitch was asked to indicate the important people in his life on his leaf. Mitch's responses are listed below.



Mitch was able to complete the activity by indicating eight important people in his life. Based on his responses it is clear that the important people in his life cluster around his family. As such, all of the people listed in the activity, with the exception of one, are members of his biological family. Mitch describes his interactions with his family members in the following sentiment, *“Um I don't really like my grandma so I don't feel like putting her down but I might as well put my nana because she's in my family and I care for her.”* Thus, it is clear that Mitch values family as he acknowledges the importance of his grandmother as an extended member of his family despite not really liking her. In addition to his grandmother, Mitch's grandfather holds an important role in his life. Mitch describes his relationship with his grandfather in the following statement,

I don't see my Papa that much. I use to see him every weekend but now I see him every other weekend because I'm here. I had a gas powered Jeep that he gave me; it went so fast he cared - if I like got in a crash he'd care. Yeah, we had a little tractor too called Little Red and I named it, I painted it a very, very light red.

Based on Mitch's responses it could be suggested that he has multiple meaningful connections with his family members. Furthermore, it can be garnered that Mitch values the importance of family; however, since living at the home his ability to spend time with important family members is limited.

Mitch's mother works a low paying job and his father is a truck driver. Mitch reports that he rarely sees his father because he is often on the road and states, *“My dad only sees me when he can because he's a truck driver.”* Due to his father's absence Mitch's mother is the primary and often sole caregiver for him and his siblings. Mitch's family struggles financially and consequently Mitch did not have the privilege of buying

new clothes when he lived with his mother. Mitch reports that he used to wear tattered clothes and that this caused significant tensions between him and his peers at school.

When Mitch moved to the home he was able to purchase new clothes and he indicates that this has left a positive impression on his self-concept. Mitch captures the impact of his appearance on his interactions with his peers in the following sentiment, *“I look better because I have new clothes; I use to have all dirty clothes and that stuff. Since I got new clothes people have been treating me better at school.”*

Mitch’s personality and temperament is unlike many of the youth at the home; he is meek and quiet and his small personality is often overpowered by the other youth. Mitch typically takes the role of a wallflower at the home and due to the large personalities of his peers his presence often goes unnoticed. Mitch’s personality matches his size as he is very small for his age and weighs approximately 65 pounds. The staff often comment on his physical appearance saying that he is too thin, has a grey complexion due to malnourishment and needs to eat. Despite this attention, Mitch still struggles to eat full meals and he is often the last youth to finish his meals. Mitch’s eating habits have caused tension during mealtimes at the home as the staff frequently argue with him to finish his meals and threaten to punish him if he refuses to eat. Beyond his small stature, Mitch has long shaggy dirty blond hair, which contributes to his skater persona. Mitch likes to skateboard and he typically wears clothes from skateboarding companies.

Living in a nice but violent place. When describing the home Mitch claims that it is a nice place to live; however, he also recognizes that it is a violent place to live.

Although Mitch notes that the home is a nice place, he has conflicting views of the home

as he feels the violence makes it a less desirable place to live. Mitch captures his fluctuating perspectives of the home in the following sentiment, *“It’s a pretty nice place except some kids here will lose it sometimes like [one kid] for instance he’ll trip me, trip anyone, he kicked the one girl here in the face.”* Mitch acknowledges that being exposed to violence is an implicit part of living at the home and he reports that the types of violence vary and states, *“All it is is fighting, punching, kicking - that’s about it but there’s also other stuff going on. There’s, I don’t know, name calling like for instance like the H words, the B words, the A words, the F words - all that stuff.”* Although the violence at the home is relatively chronic Mitch reports that he makes a conscious effort to avoid the fighting. When Mitch tries to avoid the fighting he will withdraw from his peers and sequester away in his room. Mitch captures his experiences with the violence at the home in the following sentiment, *“When I’m here it’s pretty not really that boring - it’s actually pretty worse because there’s fighting going on. I get bored because I’m in my room because I don’t want to be in it [referring to the fighting] so I just go in my room.”* Thus, although Mitch is not directly a part of the violence at the home it still has an impact on his lived experiences at the home.

The violent actions of Mitch’s peers have a larger impact on his lived experience than keeping him hiding in his room. Mitch also reports how he feels upset and disappointed by his peer’s violent behaviours and states,

Um well if it’s not me I feel disappointed for them but if it’s me I can stand up for myself hopefully. Like whoever, like say you got in a fight with somebody, like you were bullying, I’d feel bad that’s what I mean like cause since I’m in grade seven

we use um adult words like we're not using grade four words anymore or grade five so.

Mitch comments on how he has been afforded a new level of maturity since graduating into grade seven. Furthermore, he struggles with his peers' violent discourses as he finds them immature. In addition to the violence at the home, Mitch also indicates that his peers' aggressive commentary often spills over during his family visits. Mitch claims that his peers will cyber-bully him when he is on Facebook at his mother's house and states,

[One youth] he messages me on Facebook and he's like oh F you, you retard and stuff like that, he said the whore word and stuff so I'm like at least I'm not a girl so pretty much then I said that and think oh I just called him a girl and I'm like oh well I don't really care so. [He's] just trying to get me to swear on Facebook to get me banned.

Despite being physically away from the home Mitch is still exposed to the violence of his peers, which suggests that the violence is a relatively inescapable part of living at the home.

Furthermore, there are instances when Mitch is forced into situations that may turn violent as he claims that group outings often become a space that is hyper-violent. Consequently, Mitch reports that he often feels unsafe when he is on outings with his peers who are acting out aggressively. Mitch captures his experiences on group outing in the following sentiment,

Um they're pretty fun but sometimes they'll be a little harsh like they'll start yelling in the museums and stuff like that and [they are] very, very, very uh

argumentative and uh not safe because of what do you call it like um say I said like the H word the H-O-R I don't know how to spell it but um if I said that then yeah I'd get in trouble, everyone would get in trouble.

Group outings may provide a dual space that is both enjoyable and harmful. Mitch indicates that when these outings turn into a forum for violent expressions everyone gets punished. As such, the violent behaviours of one or two youth may result in punishing the entire group as Mitch states, “We'll have to probably just leave or something like that.”

Although Mitch reports that the entire group may be punished for the violent acts of one he also acknowledges that the punishments are often ineffective and states, “If they fight with someone they should get more time than ten minutes in their room.” Despite Mitch recognizing that the punishments could improve, he indicates that how staff interject and address the violence has an impact on his sense of safety. Mitch captures the role of the staff in securing his safety at the home in the following sentiment,

Pretty much all of the staff [are important], some of them are fun, some of them if you get all snotty with them they'll get all strict on you and you don't want that to happen because they'll put you in a restraint. They grab your arms and put them behind you. They'll go like that and your arms will be like this like yeah very tight so it feels like they're breaking your arms but they're not. So they, like if [a youth] comes at me, the staff will be right there.

The violence at the home challenges Mitch's feelings of safety and also complicates the relationships that he has with others at the home. Mitch reports that he has developed relationships with many of his peers at the home; however, these relationships are tested by the violence. The complexities of Mitch's relationships at the home are captured in the

following remark, “[*One youth*] he just trips me and he says oh I’m your best friend and I’m like I don’t believe you because he’s like all tripping me and that stuff.” Therefore, the home functions by providing a false sense of closeness between the youth where Mitch is left to evaluate the authenticity his friendships at the home.

Negotiating [in]authentic friendships. Mitch comments on how his move to the home has complicated many of his friendships. He reports that living at the home has altered his friendships in the community and confused the friendships with his peers at the home. Fundamentally, the house has constrained Mitch’s ability to nurture his existing friendships in the community partly because of distance and also because of the restrictive policies that are in place. Mitch acknowledges the impact that living at the home has on his former relationships in the following statement, “*I use to play with [my best friend] like 24/7 like till like after school till like ten o'clock at night but now it's only till like at the weekends at like two or two thirty till ten.*” Mitch is unable to visit with his friends unless he is visiting with his family and consequently he only sees them on the weekends. Moreover, due to the distance from the home to his former community Mitch does not have access to the transportation needed to visit his friends and states, “*I can't go to my friends' house, they [staff] don't drive me.*”

When Mitch is able to spend time with his friends he reports that their behaviours have changed. Mitch notes that many of his friends have changed for the worse since he moved to the home and claims that he must alter his interactions with them when spending time together on the weekends. Since his move Mitch has become sensitized to the rules of the home and has made a conscious effort to follow the rules in order to

return to his family. Importantly, Mitch remains sensitized to the rules of the home on the weekends when he is with his friends and states,

My friends have got very like they're swearing and I'm like alright don't say the P word like don't say the F word out loud because I'm here [referring to living at the home] and I cant get in trouble with you and [my best friend's] like well I don't care and I'm like alright then are you sure we're friends and he's like yeah we're friends and then he started talking a little softer and just stopped for a second and I told him yeah that's what I thought. I don't want to be near him when he's swearing and that's what I don't like about him, he swears a lot.

If Mitch is to return to his family he must refrain from getting in trouble and this has caused him to alter his interactions with his friend. Mitch reports that he may be punished for the misbehaviours of his friends and as a result he must monitor his actions and the actions of those in his company. Mitch's interactions with his friends are further complicated by his efforts to conceal his identity living at the home. As such, he has made a concerted effort to hide his current situation from others and reports,

[No one knows that I live here] and that's a good thing too. I don't tell them or I don't tell anyone that would tell; my girlfriend doesn't know and that's a good thing. I don't want her to know I'm here because then she'll probably say oh okay and yeah because this is like a mental health place and even though like all of us have mental health issues even everyone in the building right now; like say you say you don't everyone in the world does even though they think they don't they have something.

Mitch is aware of the stigma that accompanies mental illness and this has motivated him to safeguard his anonymity as a youth living at the home. Consequently, maintaining his anonymity has complicated his friendships because he must alter the way he interacts with his friends. Concealing this part of his life is not easy and Mitch reports that his peers at school have questioned his living situation and states,

They'll say oh where do you live and I'll say I live with my mom so because well I said the one time that I lived with my dad in grade four and then they were like oh I thought you lived with your dad and I'm like well, because I wasn't here, and then I'm like well you know things can change, you can move to your mom's back to your mom's and they're like oh you've got a point.

Mitch's sentiment captures the value he places on concealing his identity while living at the home and he also addresses the challenges he faces securing his privacy. As such, the process involved with maintaining his privacy is onerous and Mitch must be cognizant of what he has told his peers and how he will react if they challenge the validity of his living situation.

Although Mitch does not have access to his friends while living at the home he does have access to the other youth living at the home. As a result, Mitch has formed friendships with his peers at the home due to their proximity and states, *"Some of them are good like [one person] is okay and some of them are okay but most of them no I wouldn't prefer having them as friends or even calling them friends."* Mitch acknowledges that his friends at the home are vastly different from his friends in the community and describes these differentials in the following sentiment, *"The friends I have are very nice; the ones here are very weird and argumentative."* Mitch is left to

negotiate the complexities of his friendships, those being authentic and those that have been thrust upon him while at the home. Despite the complexities of his relationships Mitch claims that his best friend lives at the home and states, *“I kind of like her so she’s like my best friend and she said oh I’m like her little brother. We’ll go on our iPods together and stuff like that.”*

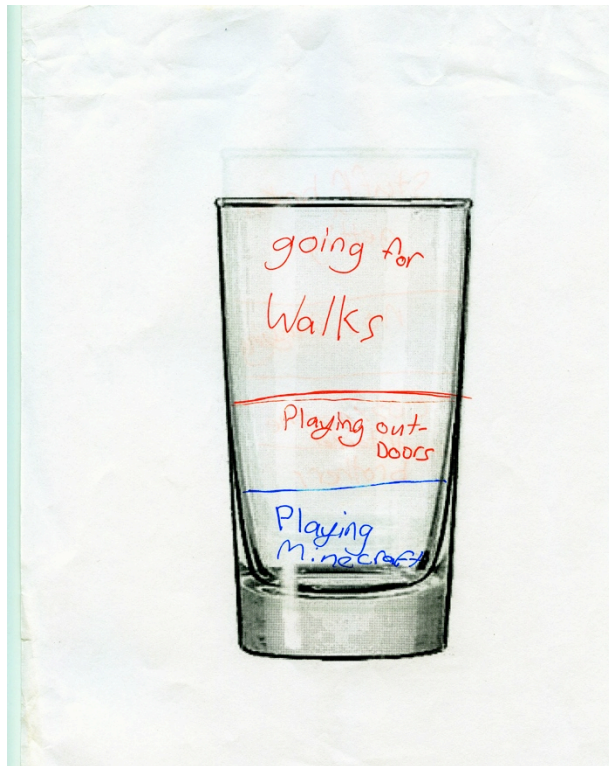
Mitch’s move to the home has impacted more than just his friendships as it has altered the way he spends his time and the leisure activities that he participate in both inside and outside of the home.

Leisure expressions: A source of constraint and contention. Since moving to the home Mitch reports that he has ceased participation in many of his former leisure interests or altered his participation in some way while he is at the home. Fundamentally, Mitch notes that he is unable to maintain his participation in many of his former activities as the policies at the home restrict his access to certain leisure activities. As such, Mitch must go through multiple channels of approval before engaging in certain activities and states,

The top things [that I enjoy doing] - there’s probably three things but going for walks, that’s my favourite. I need community time apparently for that – I asked my FACS worker and she said maybe.

Thus, if Mitch would like to participate in a community based leisure activity he must be granted permission from his FACS worker. After his FACS worker has deemed it appropriate for him to participate in the activity he then must seek permission from the staff in order to utilize his community time. As a result, Mitch must go through multiple channels of approval before engaging in a particular leisure activity.

Mitch notes that the barriers and channels he encounters when attempting to engage in recreation constrains his access to activities that generate positivity. In the following activity, Mitch was asked to record the things in his life that bring him happiness.

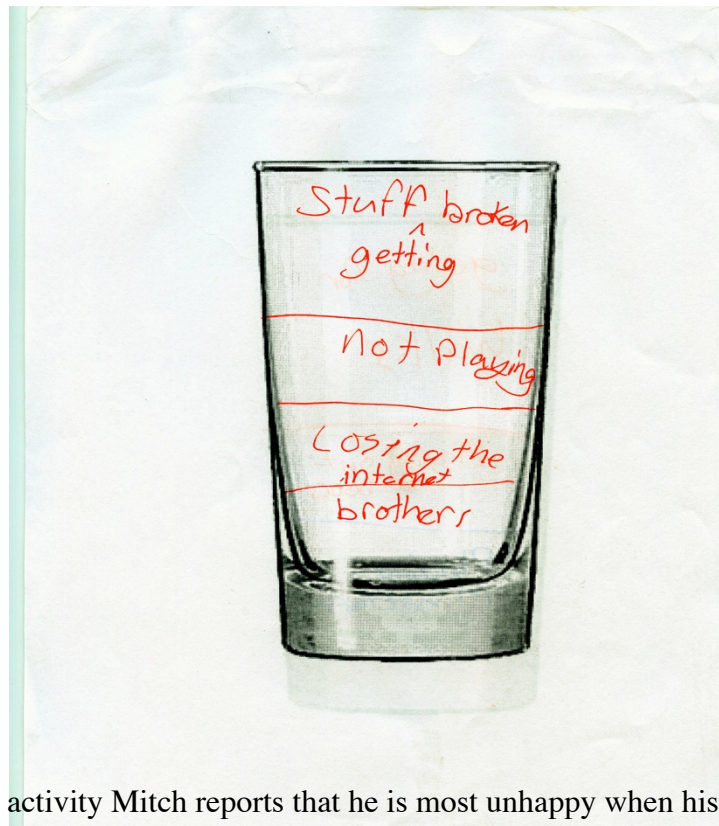


Mitch reports that he derives the greatest joy from going for walks, playing outdoors, and playing mine craft. Although these three activities are central to him experiencing positive emotion he reports that living at the home has constrained his access to these activities. Mitch is unable to go to the park or play outdoors because he does not have community time and states, *“Community time is when you can go out on your own and I don’t have it yet, I don’t know why, I should be able to have it by now because I have been here for over six months.”* As a result, Mitch is limited to participating in leisure activities that are available at the home. The implications of limiting his access to activities available on the property of the home may be significant for Mitch. The

significance of these restrictions is most evident in that the majority of Mitch's favoured leisure activities are not available at the home. Due to the restrictiveness of the home, Mitch is less likely to derive the same benefits from his leisure activities as he would if he was living with his family.

In addition to reporting on the aspects of his life that bring him happiness, Mitch was also asked to report on the things in his life that take away from his happiness.

Mitch's responses are listed below:



In the above activity Mitch reports that he is most unhappy when his belongings get broken; when he is not able to spend time with his friends; when he loses the Internet; and his brothers. Mitch comments on these aspects of his life in the following sentiment, *"Losing the Internet, I hate it when that happens, sometimes we lose it here, um not playing with my friends like not being able to I kind of get sad."* Mitch reports that when

the home restricts his access to the Internet and his friends he is likely to become sad. As such, it becomes clear that some of the policies at the home have a direct impact on Mitch's emotions. In addition to this, Mitch indicates,

Brothers, they're very annoying, I didn't know they could be. Getting stuff broken, I get pretty mad because if it gets broken, say my brother breaks it, I'll break it, I'll break something of his. My IPod, I let someone listen to music for the day and they gave it back and they had butter like or like their hands were wet and then they dropped it and I got so mad it's still it's still working it's a lot worse though. It's like all smashed up and the corner is gone, I'm pretty surprised it still works. And if it was like my iPhone, I'm not bringing my iPhone here no way because it might get broken.

In the above sentiment, Mitch captures how other people have an influence over his happiness and this is especially true when they break his belongings. As a result, Mitch must be mindful of what he brings into the home. Consequently, Mitch has decided to not bring certain things into the home for fear that they will get broken.

In addition to the aforementioned aspects of Mitch's life that constrains his happiness he also reports that he does not have the authority to self-select his preferred leisure engagements. Despite his lack of freedom, Mitch is able to engage in community recreation if it is a part of the programmed activities at the home. Mitch claims that he has little discretion over the activities that are offered at the home and states,

I have no choices - as long as we don't go swimming because I don't have shorts then I'm okay but other stuff then I will have a say but usually when I say it they're like oh no it's too far away even though it's like right around the corner.

Mitch reports that he has no say over the activities that are offered at the home and when he does voice his interests they are often disregarded. Mitch states, *“We don’t really go out that much”* and when he and his peers are able to go out the activities are often limited to a select few, primarily bowling or swimming. Mitch captures his disregard for not having a choice in leisure in the following sentiment, *“They should let us do more things than just bowling. Instead of bowling and all that stuff like actually go, I don’t know, to an arcade – that’s what I suggested for the Tuesday coming up.”* The youth will typically engage in one physical activity in the community a week and even though Mitch does not have swimming shorts the group often goes swimming. Mitch comments on his experiences swimming in the following remark, *“I didn’t really want to go swimming and I’m like as soon as I heard that we were going somewhere else I was like oh okay, it’s not swimming that’s good because I have no shorts yet. If we go swimming I just sit out.”*

Beyond not having a say in the programmed activities Mitch also encounters barriers to participating in leisure based on his interactions with his peers. Mitch reports that the free time context often becomes a contentious space that leaves him vulnerable to altercations with peers. Mitch describes an altercation with a peer over his interest to enroll in a sport in the following statement,

I asked if I could go and get into hockey, [one youth’s] like oh you’re not a good skater and I’m like are you sure? I body-checked you to the ground one day and he’s like wow dude where did you learn that and I’m like my dad and he’s like that’s pretty good and he started to say oh you suck and all that stuff and I’m like oh okay I suck at this and that’s okay so I pretty much just agree with him.

The above sentiment captures a confrontation that surrounds the free time context as Mitch's sport skills are often compared with his peers. Mitch continues to comment on his interactions with his peer in the sport context,

With the [one youth] and stuff I can see him fighting oh you're not good he tries to make you all aggressive and he tried to make you get all angry and fight with him so he just wants to fight with someone. It kind of sucks but when I'm at my mom's it's okay because [he] isn't there to instigate me.

Mitch claims that his recreation experiences at the home become a source of confrontation and aggression. As a result, he chooses to opt out of sports in order to avoid the fighting. Consequently, Mitch claims that he will wait until he is back living with his mother before he will try to engage in sport again.

Mitch's disengagement from sport is multifaceted, thus, confrontation with his peers is only one barrier keeping him from participating. Importantly, Mitch states that he has been disengaged from organized activities since his move to the home and this is not typical for him. Before moving to the home Mitch participated in organized hockey and soccer and states, *"I don't really do soccer or hockey anymore because I'm here."* When describing the reasons for his disengagement Mitch states, *"Because there's no transportation, because it's in [another town], you can't do that every Thursday or every other Thursday so I don't get to. When I move back with my mom eventually."* Although Mitch is interested in participating in an organized sport league he is committed to participating in his community of origin with his old teammates and coach. Since Mitch is from an area that is approximately one hour away from the home he does not have the

means to attend the weekly or bi-weekly practices and games. As a result, he is completely disengaged from any organized activities in the community.

Due to his disengagement from many of his previously enjoyed activities, Mitch claims that he and his peers are often bored at the home. Since the home restricts access to activities in the community Mitch claims that the computers have become an important vehicle to alleviate his boredom while living at the home. Mitch comments on the role of computer games at the home in the following sentiment,

I just made up a random game because I thought it would be fun for the kids here because they say oh I'm always bored and they always say that so I'm like alright I'll go home and make this website and I'm like are you bored anymore? And they're like yeah I'm still bored and I'm like well alright, keep thinking that and then I told them type RoBlox.com and they're not really that bored anymore.

By Mitch developing a computer game for his peers, he was able to engage in something altruistic as he created the game with the intentions of contributing to a culture of enjoyment at the home. Mitch captures his desires to be altruistic in the following sentiment,

They [referring to the website managers] asked if I wanted money and I'm like no I don't want any money just keep it a free online thing I don't really care if I get paid or not but this one day of course I get paid two hundred dollars [of game money] and I'm like alright and I gave it away.

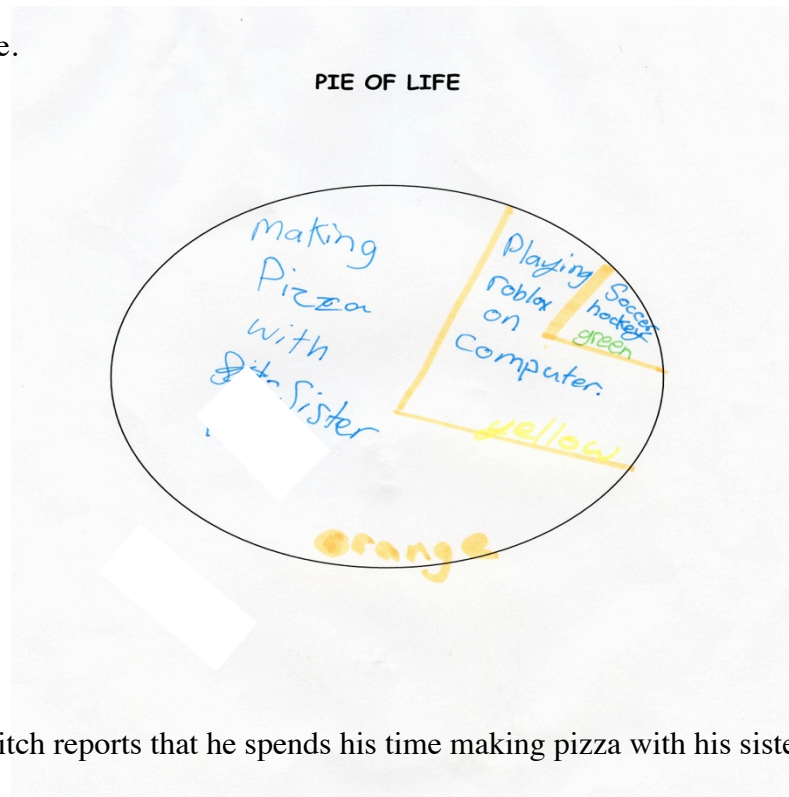
Mitch reports that he spends the majority of his time at the home playing the computer and states, “I go on the computers that's pretty much all I do.” Despite spending the majority of his time on the computers, Mitch still encounters many restrictions in terms

of how he can occupy his computer time. Mitch comments on the unique restrictions on his computer use in the following statement, *“It’s pretty fun, I get to do whatever, we can’t go on Facebook or anything like that but I can leave messages for my family or anybody for e-mails for like uh g-mail or e-mailing.”* Thus, Mitch is faced with some stipulations to his computer use and he comments on how the rules at the home alter his connections with his family and friends. As a result, Mitch often spends his time playing computer games like the one he created. Although Mitch spends a lot of time playing computer games he indicates that the privacy setting on the computers at the home leave him vulnerable to hacking and consequently he cannot play certain games as his peers may hack his account. Mitch describes his experiences being hack by his peers, *“Whenever they press the tab button it automatically puts the password in so yeah that’s how these computers are so I’m like okay I’m not going on RoBlox anymore. I usually go on my brother’s account or I go on as a guest now.”* Furthermore, Mitch indicates that he wishes the staff would address the youth that hack other people’s accounts and states,

I wish they would like say okay RoBlox is done you can’t go on it anymore, except for certain people, but some people I wish they couldn’t go on RoBlox that they weren’t allowed, I can easily ban them because I’m the creator of RoBlox I can get them banned.

Despite claiming that he can ban his peers from the computer game Mitch is relatively powerless in terms of controlling his peers’ behaviours. As a result, Mitch must deal with the repercussions of his peers’ behaviours because there is nothing he can do to prevent them from hacking him or acting with aggression. As a result, Mitch’s lived experience at the home is highly dependent on his peers.

In the following activity Mitch was asked to report on how he spends his time while living at the home.



In the above activity Mitch reports that he spends his time making pizza with his sister, playing RoBlox on the computer and playing soccer and hockey. As indicated in the pie chart, and his earlier sentiments, Mitch spends the least amount of time playing soccer and hockey while he is living at the home. Mitch's response in the activity is congruent with his earlier sentiments as Mitch reports *"Soccer and hockey, I use to play that a lot but now I don't because I'm here."* Furthermore, Mitch claims that he intends to participate in soccer when he is back living with his mom. While at the home Mitch reports that he spends the bulk of his time playing on the computer and this is reflected in his earlier sentiment, *"I go on the computers, that's pretty much all I do."* Thus, Mitch's computer use is an important part of his free time experiences at the home.

Mitch also reports that he spends the bulk of his time making pizza with his sister. Although Mitch claims that this activity occupies most of his time in earlier sentiments, he acknowledged that he is unable to see his family as much as he would like. Mitch

conveys the rarity of spending time with his sister by stating, *“On Sunday I got a free pizza from [my sister] because she works there so I got to make a free pizza, she got one of those coupons so I made it myself and it actually tasted pretty good. She said it might be a one and only thing.”* There are inconsistencies in Mitch’s interpretations of the activity as he reports that he spends the majority of his time making pizza with his sister, even though it was a *“One and only thing”*. More so, Mitch states that when he does spend time with his sister they will typically, *“Go to Timmies and stuff like that.”*

Identity development: A process of self and other. When asked to describe himself, Mitch reports that he is a RoBlox player and that he is jazzy and organized. Mitch comments on these identifying qualities in the following sentiment,

I’d say oh I’m organized and stuff. I’m [also] jazzy because I like dancing, not really but I dance in my room to the music like for the song play that funky music white boy. [Also] there’s one [staff member] he’s like oh you look pretty amazing today and all jazzy you know.

Mitch is able to identify that some of his leisure interests are reflective of who he is and consequently affirm his identity. Additionally, he acknowledges that the commentary of staff validates his identity. Mitch describes how the the perspectives of others influence how he sees himself as they affirm his identities and also shed new light on aspects of himself. Mitch captures the influence of others on his identity in the following sentiment, *“My friends would say I’m funny but that’s not my thing.”* In addition to his friends, Mitch comments on how his peers at the home see him and states, *“They see me as funny, quiet and amazing.”*

Central to Mitch's identity are his leisure interests. In the following activity Mitch was asked to report on his leisure interests across time.

Past	Present	Future
-Playing soccer -Spending time with friends	-School -Running	-Spending time with my dog -Travel

Past	Present	Future
Dirt biking biking biking	track-field Roblox.com	Dirt biking races

In the activity, Mitch reports that he is currently involved in track and field and RoBlox. Mitch's engagement in RoBlox is reflective of one of his identities as a RoBlox player and game inventor. Mitch's identity playing RoBlox is captured in his earlier remark where he states, *"I'm the creator of RoBlox"*. Importantly, Mitch notes that in the past he drove a dirt bike and in the future he aspires to race dirt bikes. Despite acknowledging the importance of riding dirt bikes, Mitch notes that he is currently disengaged from riding his dirt bike and states, *"I want to go back to dirt biking but not dirt biking, dirt bike racing."* Not only is Mitch interested in reengaging in a past leisure interest, he is hopeful that his skill will evolve and open new opportunities for him and his dirt biking. It is important to note that the restrictiveness of the home has placed unique limits on Mitch's the leisure interests. Mitch encounters unique constraints on his leisure while living at the

home and captures these constraints in his statement, “*They should let us do more things than just bowling*” and “*Playing outdoors, I play in the back yard; I can’t go to the park when I’m here.*” Thus, the restrictiveness of the home has limited Mitch’s ability to participate in past positive leisure activities that he once identified with.

In summary, Mitch describes how living at the home has exposed him to unique constraints on his leisure and identity that he might not have experience otherwise. Seminal to his experiences at the home is how he is restricted from seeing his friends and participating in his favoured leisure activities. As a result, living at the home has prompted Mitch to develop new friends and new leisure interests that are accessible at the home. Thus, the home plays a particularly important role in dictating his leisure interests. Beyond this, Mitch describes the home as a nice yet violent place to live. Although he describes the home a nice place this is somewhat contrary to his behaviours. Mitch makes a conscious effort to conceal his identity as a youth in care because he is fearful of being stigmatized. As a result, living at the home has an impact on Mitch’s developing identity because he is less able to express himself in ways that he did prior to living at the home. Furthermore, Mitch reports that living at the home places him at risk for being stigmatized and this has a bearing on his sense of self.

Nathanael's Portrait

Nathanael is a 13 year old boy with dark brown hair that is styled in a bowl cut. He is overweight, weighing nearly 200 pounds, and this causes a lot of tension for him at the home. Nat claims that he hates living at the home because his peers regularly pick on him because he is overweight. Nat notes that anyone who is different at the home is at risk for being bullied and states, *"Most of the kids get bullied just because they're different or what they wear or what religion they are or what colour their skin in."* Since Nat is overweight he is susceptible to the bullying at the home and I have witnessed on several occasions Nat's peers making comments about his weight.

Before coming to the home Nat was living with his mother and stepfather in a nearby community. Nat's family struggles financially as both his mother and stepfather work low paying jobs. Due to the high cost of sport, Nat's family was unable to enroll him in a sport league or different organized activities as he states, *"Sports cost too much money."* As a result, Nat was disengaged from organized activities and spent a lot of his free time unsupervised. Nat used to spend his free time lighting fires in his community with some of his friends and it was his fire lighting that led to his placement at the home. Nat reports, *"I'm an amazing arsonist"* however he acknowledges that this behaviour is what led to his current situation, *"We almost burnt down a school by accident we didn't mean to light the school on fire, we actually didn't. I wouldn't have gotten in trouble if [my friend] didn't walk into his house smelling like gasoline."* In addition to this, Nat was getting into fights with his mother as she struggled to control his violent outbursts. As a result, Nat was placed at the home with the intent to address his aggressiveness and to stop lighting fires in the community.

Nat has been living at the home for five months; however, the original plan was for him to stay for three months. Two months into his stay at the home, Nat became excited by the prospects of returning to his family and he shared his excitement with everyone at the home. As such, Nat would celebrate his return to his mom by giving the staff, youth, and volunteers a weekly countdown until his discharge. During this time, the staff commented on Nat's progress and spoke openly about his discharge and how it was evidence of their effectiveness. A week before Nat's discharge he attended a case meeting and was informed that he would not return to his family as expected and that his mother was signing another three month contract.

When Nat received the news that he would be staying at the home for at least three more months he was devastated. The staff noticed that much of Nat's progress was lost in the decision to keep him at the home and many commented on how Nat's old behaviours resurfaced. After the decision to extend Nat's stay was made he began to act out defiantly; he verbally attacked the staff; got into fights with his peers; and resisted the rules of the home. Furthermore, Nat began to neglect his personal hygiene. Nat refused to shower or change his clothes and he would wear the same baggy grey sweat pants paired with an oversized t-shirt filled with holes. For a very long time Nat also refused to cut his hair until his bangs, weighted by grease, covered his eyes. During this time Nat was followed by a pungent smell that could be described as sour milk or wet socks. As a result, his poor hygiene created physical and emotional distance between him, the staff, and the other youth. At times it was physically impossible to get close to Nat because his smell was so overpowering it would likely cause you to get nauseous. The distance caused by Nat's hygiene compromised his ability to interact with his peers during their

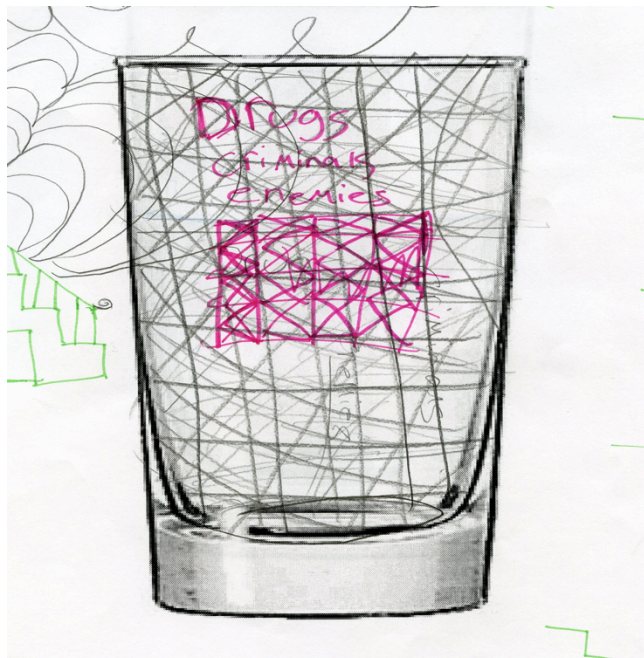
free time. As such, when watching television or movies Nat would lie on the couch and those who dared to sit by him, which was infrequent, would be forced to endure his smell. Other times, Nat would want to play on the computers with his peers but his potent smell was too much for the small space where the computers are housed. Nat's peers would complain about his smell and tell him that he could not play with them because he smelled too badly.

Being the victim and perpetrator: The cyclic nature of violence. Nat claims that there is a lot of bullying at the home as evidenced in his sentiment "*Bullying, that's pretty common here.*" Moreover, Nat also reports that people who are different are especially at risk of being a targeted. Since Nat is one of the only overweight youth at the home, his physical appearance is a blatant demonstration of his differences from his peers. During my time at the home, I noticed that the youth placed significant value on being similar and anyone who deviated from the norm (being white, male, heterosexual and athletic) was ridiculed. Although Nat is white, heterosexual and male his weight is a visible difference that causes him significant grief. Nat claims that he hates interacting with the other youth at the home because of the bullying as he states, "*People hit me and call me names which of course if they don't stop I'll kick their asses or if the house lets me I will teach them a lesson or send them to military school.*" Nat's sentiment captures a typical day at the home for him because he is often the target of bullying. Moreover, he describes his usual response to the bullying as he often responds to the violence with aggression and states, "*I guess most of them say I'm the bully.*" Nat captures the cyclic nature of the bullying at the home as he moves rather fluidity from victim to perpetrator.

Nat reports that the bullying at the home is not effectively addressed by the staff and states, *“They [staff] send them [youth] to their room but it doesn’t really do anything - all it is is ten minutes in their room and that doesn’t really change anything.”* Based on Nat’s perspective, it could be suggested that the degree in which the staff intervene impacts the culture of the home. Nat reports that in order to address the violence at the home something must change and he provides a suggestion to address the bullying in the following sentiment,

[This place would be better if it had] cameras, security cameras, ones that are in front of every door so that when somebody comes out or something happens they’ll be able to know and they can be watching without even being upstairs because a lot of things happen and the staff don’t even now about it.

The bullying at the home directly impacts how Nat feels as he states, *“It makes me feel bad.”* Furthermore, he believes that more surveillance might contribute to a culture that is less violent and aggressive. In the following activity Nat was asked to comment on the aspects of his life that detract from his happiness.



Nat reports that central to his unhappiness are drugs, criminals, and enemies. Nat comments on these aspects of his life in the following statement, *“People who are on drugs they give away everything for the drugs, um criminals because they don't care who they're hurting they just care about what they're gaining from it, and enemies they don't care about anybody's feelings but their own.”* When asked if he has encountered any of these negatives Nat responded by stating, *“Drugs yes, enemies yes, criminals no.”* Nat did not want to comment further on these aspects of his life.

Nat indicates that he has some enemies at the home, especially those who bully him. Nat acknowledges that the violence at the home is largely due to the fact that many of the youth have low self-esteem and states, *“[They bully] because they have low self-esteem and they want to make other people feel bad.”* Even though Nat recognizes that his peers bully him because of their personal demons he struggles to ignore their commentary. Nat reports that it is difficult to ignore his peers when they constantly comment on his weight but he asserts, *“Never believe what anyone tells you because say if somebody called you ugly and you don't think so just believe what you want and know that you're not ugly and go with what you feel.”* For Nat, the majority of his altercations with his peers occur during his free time. He indicates that some of his worst moments at the home are during shared leisure activities. Nat comments on how the free time context can become a combative space in the following statement,

We were watching a movie, I was sitting in my chair, they were being rude to me sticking their middle finger up at me calling me a fat ass and [one youth] comes and decides to pull the chair out from under me so I got up off my chair and threatened to smack him over the head with it.

Living in a place that is focused on growth and development. When describing the home Nat claims that self-improvement is a central component of the culture at the home and states, *“The [home] is a residence where kids who have mental or physical problems will go to get help from staff. [It] presents opportunities for the children to learn aspects of controlling their anger and fears.”* Nat acknowledges that the home is intended to target and improve the problems that brought the youth to the home. Since the agenda of the home is relatively transparent, in that the youth are aware that they have come to the home to work on their problematic behaviours, it has an affect on the way that some view themselves. Nat describes the impact that living at the home has on his self-concept in the following statement, *“I feel like I’m a no good rotten delinquent who deserves to be here.”* Despite his negative self-concept, Nat recognizes that living at the home encourages him to work toward minimizing the problems that led to his placement. As such, Nat claims that he focuses his attention toward how he can improve so that he can return to his family.

Nat believes that the person who he was prior to moving to the home is a cause for change and that he must consciously work toward bettering himself. Nat comments on the home in the following statement, *“We get three meals a day which are very healthy which is good for us also the staff are always here to help us with our problems and we get to do fun things every week.”* Nat claims the staff are relatively accessible at the home and that they help him through his difficulties. Furthermore, he acknowledges that the staff play a role in facilitating his growth by being a reliable source of support. Due to the support of the staff, Nat reports that he is beginning to see himself in a better light and reports, *“I use to think of myself as an underappreciated emo teenager [but*

now] as a happy appreciated fun loving teenager.” Although Nat is beginning to see himself in a more positive light he still experiences discrimination from his peers at school and in sport.

Purposive leisure: A space to display violence and growth. When Nat engages in recreation with his peers at the home he typically plays basketball in the backyard and reports that sometimes his peers become overly aggressive and hostile. As a result, Nat’s participation in basketball is not always favorable as he claims that his peers bully him on the court. When this happens, Nat will stop participating and spend his remaining free time engaging in solitary activities inside the house. Nat describes the activities that he participates in at the home in the following sentiment, *“What happens here, we play basketball, uh watch TV, well not now but we used to be able to go on the computer, um do puzzles, colour, read, pretty much anything, play cards. Boring, typical and unfun.”*

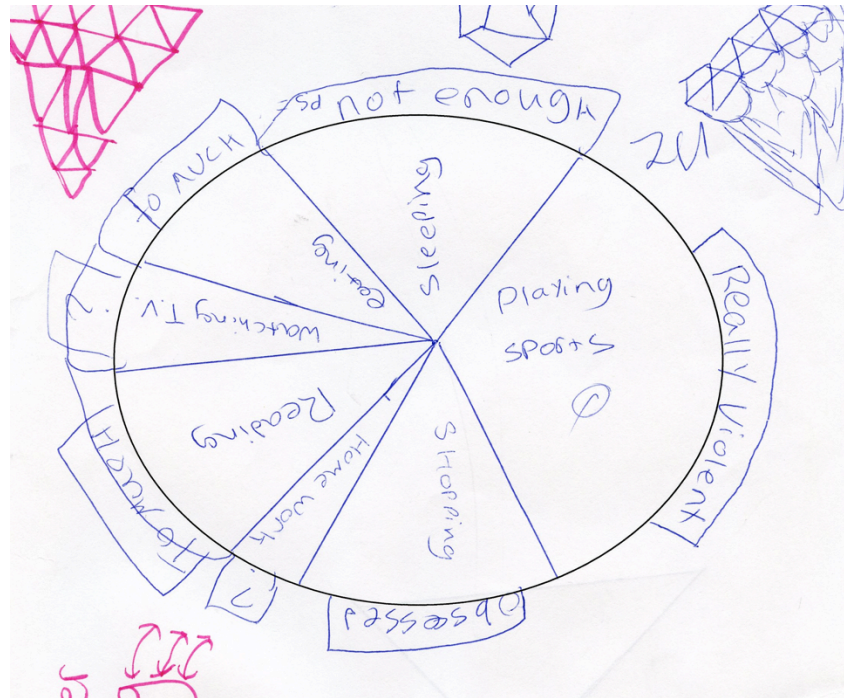
When commenting on his leisure experiences Nat reports that he has altered his leisure to incorporate activities that are functional and productive and states, *“I use to sit on the couch watching TV but now I’m in my room doing something productive.”* While at the home Nat spends a lot of time in his room reading or completing puzzles and states, *“In my free time I like to sit in my bed and read.”* Although Nat reports that he spends a lot of his time in his room making puzzles and reading he states, *“It’s hard to do puzzles because I can’t concentrate that well because of all the yelling and fighting.”* Since the decision to place Nat at the home was primarily based on his free time decisions, it could be proposed that he alters his leisure interests to demonstrate his readiness to return home. Nat describes the fundamental change in his leisure interests in the following sentiment, *“I’m not doing anything that could hurt the community or myself.”* Thus, Nat is

consciously aware of his leisure participation and purposefully selects activities that showcase his improvements.

While at the home, Nat reports that his leisure engagements allow him to break free of the daily rhythms at the home and states, *“It’s a chance to get out of the house and relax and do something other than just sitting around and watching TV.”* In addition to this, Nat describes his recreation experiences as *“Getting out of the stress of the house.”* Although Nat’s leisure allows him to experience novelty and leave the confines of the home he notes that community recreation is limited and states, *“Some physical activity nights we have like bowling or swimming and that’s about it so there’s not really much choice. It makes me sad because we only get two choices and nothing else.”* When Nat does engage in community recreation he reports that the experiences typically become a space of aggression. Nat describes his experiences in community recreation in the following sentiment, *“It’s usually out of control and psycho like some of the kids don’t respect the staff; I’ve already made that mistake. When this happens they usually don’t take us the next time or they take something away.”* Nat reports that his experiences in community recreation often become a forum for him and his peers to act in aggressive ways. Nat comments on one of his past experiences engaging in a recreational activity in the community in the following statement,

Well it was physical activity night and we went mini golfing instead of swimming, it was just me [and two other youth] and I got really mad so when we left I refused to put my seatbelt on and, I took off [one youth’s] seatbelt and then I said a whole bunch of stuff that I got in trouble for.

In the following activity Nat was asked to report on how he typically spends his time at the home.



In the above activity Nat comments on the way he spends his time and how others might perceive him during these engagements. Nat describes these activities in the following sentiment,

I love to buy clothes, food and toys, homework I don't really like to do homework because it sucks, reading because I like to read, watching TV because it's educational, eating because everybody has to eat or else they'll die and sleeping because everybody needs to sleep or else they'll probably die from sleep deprivation.

In the above statement, Nat captures the utility of leisure in that he likes to read and watch television because it is educational. This statement is congruent with his earlier

sentiment of altering his leisure interests to be productive. Nat acknowledges how others may form an opinion about him based on his participation in the aforementioned activities. Nat captures the perspectives of others about him in the following sentiment, *“They think I’m obsessed with shopping; I don’t know, I could do more. Too much reading or not enough, well that’s what my parent’s say. I eat too much; sleeping, not enough is what I say - I need at least 24 hours of sleep.”* Thus, Nat realizes that how he spends his time may influence the perspectives of others about him.

Importantly, Nat reports that his most time consuming activity is his sport participation; however, when describing his current participation in sports he states, *“No, I do not [play organized sports], no sports.”* Nat claims that he is disengaged from sport because of the cost and reports, *“It’s too expensive, 400 dollars or 350 for the equipment and 50 bucks for the cleats.”* Due to the high costs of sports Nat is unable to maintain his participation in organized sport leagues. When further probed about how he feels about not being involved in sports Nat states, *“Meh, I could care less.”* Thus, Nat’s description of the activity is inconsistent with what is reported in the activity. Even though Nat is not currently involved in an organized sports league he still contends that it is an important part of his life. Furthermore, he indicates that when he is involved in sports his teammates perceived him as aggressive and violent.

The sport landscape: A place of violence and aggression. Nat declares that he has a strong athletic identity albeit he is not currently involved in any organized sport. As mentioned, Nat’s family does not have the financial means to enroll him in sport; however, last year he had the opportunity to play on a football team. Nat shared how he loved playing football; he felt that he was a good football player and he enjoyed the sport.

Although Nat enjoyed his experience in football he was unable to continue participating because of the expense. Nat reports, *“Playing sports is a big part of my life as everybody knows I played football last year; I was really good at it.”* Even though Nat has not been a part of an organized league since his previous experience in football he still identifies as a football player and as an athlete. Nat’s experience with sport demonstrates the pervasiveness of an athletic identity as he has held on tightly to his identity as a football player despite his current disengagement from sport. Nat’s claims that his disengagement from sport extends beyond financial constraint and states,

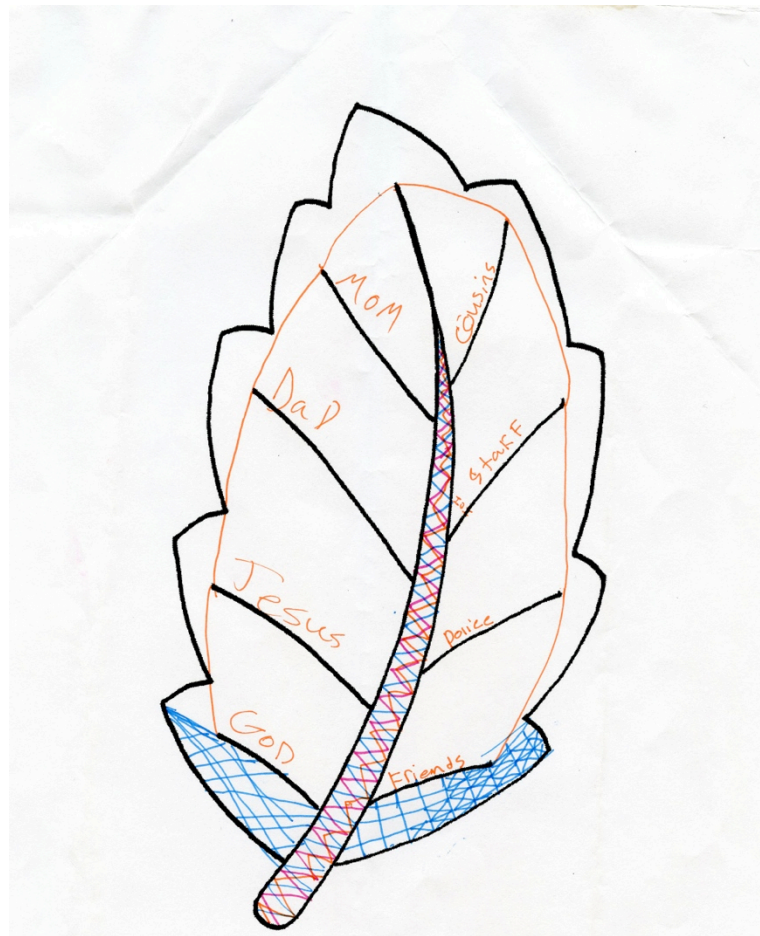
I don't like to be a team player, I like to think it's all about me and if I lose I get pissed off. I do not like to lose and if we lose I blame it on my team and say you guys should play better, it's not my fault you're losers.

Nat’s reactions to his teammates when playing sports are problematic because it has caused them to label him as an aggressive and hostile player. Nat believes that his peers discriminate against him because of his sport participation and states, *“They think I’m really violent when it comes to sports. They’re afraid of me that I’m probably gonna hit them or something but they know I never will, well on purpose I wont. I let them think that I’m gonna hit them, let them think what they want.”* Nat acknowledges that his peers have formed an opinion about him as an aggressive person, yet he claims to do little to challenge their perspectives. Although Nat reports that he would not intentionally hurt his peers he declares that he enjoys fighting and enjoys sports that are high contact. Nat states that he would like to enroll in an aggressive sport like MMA or Moi-Tai and claims, *“I like to fight; punching, kicking, grappling.”* As a result, Nat is interested in using the sport context as an avenue to express his aggression and violence because he feels that it

is an appropriate medium to display this behaviour. Thus, sports provide a suitable space for Nat to express his aggression.

Nurturing relationships in the community. Since Nat is living in a new community he does not have the opportunity to see his friends or family as much as he would if he was living with his family. Although Nat would like to spend more time with his friends he is unable to do so for multiple reasons. Primarily, Nat does not have the transportation to get to his friends' houses and he has not seen them in months. Nat comments on his interactions with his peers in the following remark, *"Because [my friends] live in [another city] and I have no way to get there I haven't seen them in a few months. I just see the kids here."* In order for Nat to nourish his relationships with his former friends he must do so by e-mailing them or calling them and this is problematic. Nat fears the stigmatization of living at the home and as a result he has not disclosed to any of his friends that he is living at the home, thus they do not have his phone number nor will he share it. Nat's difficulties connecting with peers is evidenced in his following statement, *"They don't really talk to me much because they don't know my number and they're either too busy or just don't want to talk."* Due to Nat concealing his living situation from others he is isolated from his peers and can only interact with them if he is at school. Consequently, Nat does not have a lot of opportunities to spend time cultivating friendships with his peers outside of the home. As a result, Nat's social interactions are limited to those that occur at the home.

In the following activity, Nat was asked to report on the connections he has with important people in his life; Nat's comments are listed below.



Nat struggled to complete the activity and resorted to including people like God and Jesus, despite claiming that he is not a religious person. When completing the activity, Nat's conversations were weighted to the members of his family. In the following sentiment Nat comments on the time he spends with his family,

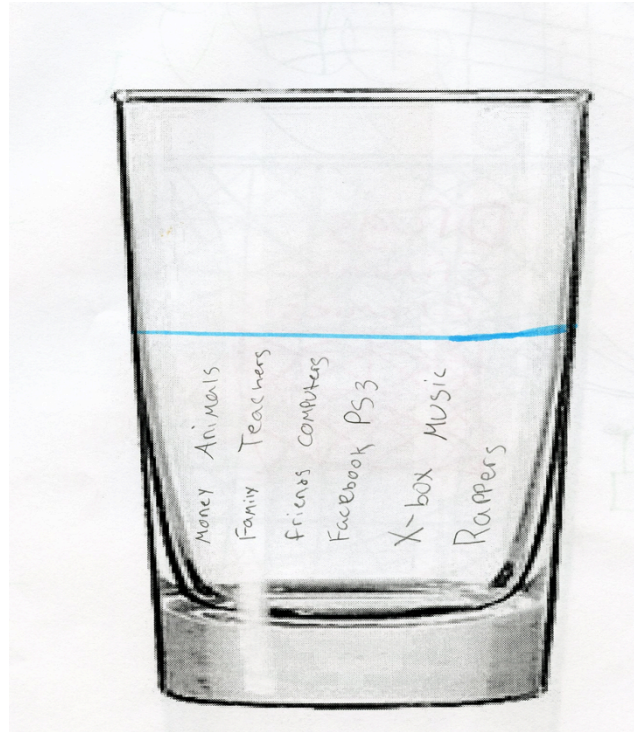
I see my mom and dad every weekend; we watch movies, we go out to 711 and buy snacks, or we'd take my dog for a walk. Well I haven't seen my cousin in a while; I'm probably gonna go this summer because she lives near a beach, I don't know where near the beach but near the beach. I learn off their [cousins] mistakes. Like my older cousin almost got sent to jail, did you hear about it on the news? They said that [her] school was threatened – that there was a bomb in the

school but she didn't get arrested because the voice was male. She said it was her but I don't think it was.

Although Nat acknowledges the importance of his family members in his life, he does not see them often while he is living at the home. Thus, Nat only spends time with important family members on the weekends or during the summer when he can see his cousins.

In addition to the important people in his family, Nat reports that the staff members at the home are important to him. When describing the staff members, Nat was able to identify two important people who work at the home. When asked what makes these two important, he reports, *"Because they help me with my problems."* Therefore, it could be suggested the support Nat receives from staff is central to him feeling they are important and care about him. Finally, Nat reports that his friends are important to him, however, he also notes that he does not have access to his friends while he is living at the home. Thus, living at the home has constrained Nat's access to multiple important people in his life. When describing the role of friends in his life Nate states, *"Friends, you only have one friend, he makes me feel good."* Although Nat does not see his friends and family as much as he did prior to living at the home, he claims that they are central to him experiencing positive emotion.

Connections with leisure and the outside world. Although in earlier remarks Nat describes the home as a violent place that constrains his happiness, he reports that there are still many aspects of his life that generate positivity. In the following activity, Nat was asked to report on the aspects of his life that bring him happiness.



Based on Nat's responses, it is clear that his leisure engagements bring him great joy as eight of his eleven responses clustered around the leisure context. Nat comments on the role that leisure plays in generating positivity in the following sentiment, *"Money, well I love to spend it, love to have it and I love to use it. PlayStation, it gets your mind of other things, X-Box you can watch movies, music to calm me down, or rappers because their songs might be about you and fit your personality."* Thus, Nat acknowledges the several reasons why leisure contributes to his positivity. Central to the connection between leisure and happiness is Nat's ability to relate to his leisure interests and escape the realities of living in residential care. It could be suggested that leisure serves an important role in Nat's life as it allows him to feel connected during a time when he is feeling relatively disconnected from the important people in his life.

In addition to the happiness that Nat derives from his leisure interests, he also notes that his connectedness to important people also impacts his happiness. Nat describes the role that his connections play in his positivity in the following sentiment,

Computers so you can talk to friends about your problems; Facebook so you can communicate with people you have never seen before, or in real life or who are far away from you. Family, you only have one family. Animals, they know when you're sad; they know when you're happy. Teachers they help you with any of your problems.

In the above sentiment, Nat comments on the importance of technology as it serves the function of connecting him with the important people in his life. The role of technology may be especially relevant to Nat given his earlier statements about feeling disconnected from friends and family. Although Nat indicates that social media serves the function of staying connected to supportive people who are far away, its use is prohibited at the home. Therefore, Nat may not be able to derive the benefits of social networking while he is at the home. Furthermore, Nat acknowledges how the supportive people in his life, such as family and teachers, contribute to him feeling positive emotion because they are invested in him and his wellbeing.

Identity development: The impacts of the home and leisure. Nat acknowledges that where he lives and how he spends his time has a direct impact on how his identity. Primarily, Nat reports that living in a therapy house impacts his self-concept as he is more focused on improving himself. Additionally, since his move to the home Nat sees himself in a better light as evidenced in his earlier sentiment, *“I use to think of myself as an underappreciated, emo, teenager [but now I see myself] as a happy, appreciated, fun*

loving teenager.” Based on Nat’s commentary it could be suggested that living at the home has impacted his identity. Importantly, he describes his fears of being identified as a youth in care and reports that he makes a concerted effort to conceal his identity while living at the home. Nat states, *“Most [people] don’t know I live here, I just don’t tell them - well most of them do know where I live, just not here.”* Thus, Nat is aware of the potential discrimination that might follow if people found out that he was living in residential care.

Despite acknowledging the impact that living at the home has on his identity, Nat describes himself as being amazing, hardy, and a great son. Nat comments on his hardiness in the following sentiment, *“I’m durable, which means I can get through the most rough times.”* In addition to these qualities, Nat also states that he is an arsonist, as reflected in the following statement, *“I’m an arsonist, I like to light fires and I haven’t even lit one yet since I’ve been here. Beware I can light you on fire.”* Also, Nat reports *“I’m back stabbing and aggressive; I’m really violent when it comes to sports.”*

Nat also defines himself by his leisure interests. In the following activity Nat was asked to describe his leisure interests across time.

Past	Present	Future
- Playing soccer - Spending time with family	- School - Long distance running	- Marathon running - Travel

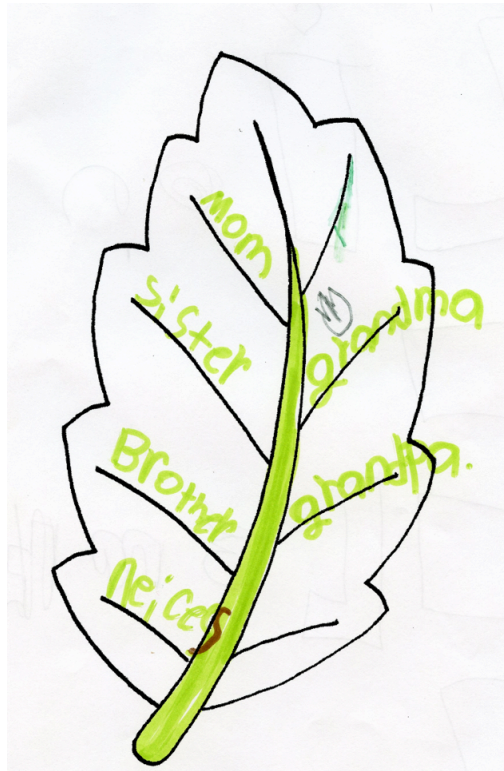
Past	Present	Future
- Playing Football - Spending time with family	- History work - long distance running - Reading	- Travel

Nat states that he is athletic and this is captured in his statement, “*Sports are a really big part of my life.*” Nat indicates that playing football was an integral part of his past; however, due to the high cost he no longer participates. Furthermore, Nat reports that history work is a big part of his current leisure profile and describes himself as “*a wonderful historian.*”

In summary, Nat indicates that he understands the importance of living in a residential care context in terms of his self- improvement and conveys that he wants to make the changes necessary to return home. However, Nat also had a number of contradictory messages in his data as he defines himself as an athlete but does not participate in athletics; he is bored and also suggests that he participates in productive activities in his free time; he sees his identity being positively impacted by being in the home yet keeps his living situation a secret from all his important friends. As such, it can be suggested that living at the home plays a central role in Nat’s life as it plays a mediating role in his identity and leisure.

Shawn's Portrait

Shawn is 14 years old and although he is older than many of the youth living at the home he is arguably the smallest. Shawn is very short and thin for his age and if judging solely by appearance you would assume he was no older than eight or nine. Shawn has dark hair that is styled in a crew cut, which is consistent with his desires to enroll in the army. Shawn was placed at the home seven months ago and the motivations behind his move were not clear; however, he reports that it was primarily due to him getting into trouble with his friends. Shawn is very impressionable and active and because of this his peers easily influence him. Before Shawn's stay at the home he was caught using drugs and vandalizing the community. Due to the choices that Shawn was making in his free time, his grandparents made the decision to place him at the home. Importantly, this is not Shawn's first time living at the home; he lived here once before but was discharged early because he was having difficulties following the rules. During the time in between Shawn's stays at the home he lived with his grandparents, as they have been his primary caregivers for many years. Despite living with his grandparents Shawn still sees his mother; however, she does not have custody over him. In addition to his mother and grandparents, Shawn has an older brother, an older sister, and two nieces who he identifies as the most important people in his life. Although Shawn considers his family to be very important to him, he is only able to see them every other weekend and states that he wishes he could see them more often. Despite only seeing his family every other weekend, Shawn claims that seeing them is always a highlight. Shawn reports on the important people in his life in the following activity,



Shawn reported that all of the important people in his life are members of his family. With further discussion, Shawn states his ties to friends have been severed since his move to the home and indicates, *“I hang out with [my friends] once a month, the bad ones anyways.”* Shawn also reports, *“A lot of [my friends] don’t like me, they tell me that, but I got a lot of friends that know my brother.”* Thus, it could be assumed that the Shawn’s negative interactions with friends could be the reason he did not mention any friends in the above activity.

In addition to this, Shawn reports that his family is important to him and that he often looks forward to the time he can spend with them. Shawn captures his longing to spend time with his family in the following statement, *“I can’t wait until this Thursday; I’m going back to mom’s until Sunday!”* Shawn’s family provides him with a source of optimism, as he is able to look forward to the future when it involves spending time with

the members of his family. Shawn comments on his interactions with family in the following remark,

I don't see my sister that often because she lives by herself but every Wednesday I get to see them [mom, brother and grandparents]. I go fishing all the time with my grandpa [or] we watch a lot of TV - well I don't because I'm just not that person to watch a lot of TV and then when I'm bored I just go on the computer a little bit and I ask my mom to use her phone to go for a bike ride and I go to visit a friend.

Although Shawn only sees his family on Wednesdays and every other weekend, these are moments where he is able to connect with important figures in his life. Shawn's story living at the home is one that is fragmented, restricted, and supported.

Living at the home: A nice but violent place to live. Shawn describes the home as “a very, very nice place [but] a lot of chaos.” When explaining his opinions about the home he reports that there are many aspects that make it a nice place to live.

Fundamentally, Shawn reports that the home has provided him with the supports necessary to experience success in the community as he states, “I'm acting good at home now and my grandma can see it too, I'm acting a lot better.” Additionally, Shawn states, “The staff here are really great - [they] are really nice.” Thus, when describing the home, Shawn portrays that it is chaotic; however, he also acknowledges his improvements and the support he receives from caring staff.

Although Shawn conveys that the staff treat him well he does not always encounter kindness when interacting with his peers. As mentioned, Shawn is significantly small for his age and this leaves him vulnerable to being bullied at the home. Shawn

claims that the worst thing about living at the home is the other youth and states, *“The kids, they pick on me.”* Shawn often bears the brunt of the bullying at the home as his peers are constantly calling him names like *“fag”, “loser”* and *“bed wetter”*. Shawn reports that the name calling is upsetting because it is not something that he is familiar with and states, *“It makes me upset because I don’t hear that a lot at home, I hear a little bit of swearing but not, you know what I mean.”* Beyond the name calling, Shawn encounters physical violence from his peers and this has resulted in him fearing for his safety while at the home. Shawn captures the impact of the violence at the home in the following sentiment, *“Be careful of some of the kids, they will try and hurt you if you’re mean to them. They will try to hurt you if you make them mad, just don’t tick them off.”* When describing the violence at the home Shawn reports that it consists of *“Throwing food at each other and calling names.”* Shawn recognizes that violence is an integral component of living at the home and claims that he is wary of his peers. Furthermore, because of the violence at the home Shawn aligns himself with certain staff members who are stronger than his peers in order to be protected. Shawn describes the qualities of an important staff member in the following sentiment, *“Because he’s bigger and stronger than everyone he won’t let anyone hurt me.”* Thus, the staff plays a central role in ensuring Shawn’s safety at the home as he reports that he actively seeks out staff members who he feels will protect him from the other youth. In addition to the physical and verbal attacks on Shawn, I have witnessed on several occasions his peers refusing to spend their free time with him and consequently he is often excluded. As such, Shawn’s leisure engagements perpetuate violence yet also provide a space where he derives significant joys.

The duality of leisure. Shawn reports that his leisure engagements at the home serve the purpose of fostering enjoyment and states, *“I like that we get to go out; we go bowling or swimming.”* Furthermore, Shawn claims that recreation provides a forum where he can express his interests and claims that the youth will negotiate their recreation participation together. Shawn states, *“Sometimes [staff will] ask us what we really want to do and nine times out of ten we’ll do it. Like bowling, people will want to go bowling and then we do an agreement on it.”* As such, recreation provides a space where the youth can act autonomously and select activities that reflect their interests. Although Shawn reports that these experiences allow him to exercise control he realizes that it is within the limitations of the group. Thus, selecting an activity provides a discursive space for the youth to share their interests while also involving a collaborative process of decision making. The youth must agree on an activity before participating and consequentially this constrains Shawn’s full autonomy.

Furthermore, Shawn acknowledges that certain recreation activities are mandated by the staff and states, *“Sometimes we have to do it if it’s programming and if we don’t want to we just have to go and sit there.”* Therefore recreation provides a dual context where Shawn’s autonomy is fostered and suppressed. The prescribed activities limit youth involvement in the decision making process and this is especially problematic if the youth do not encompass the necessary skills to participate in the mandated activities. In Shawn’s case he does not know how to swim and swimming is a regular weekly activity. Since Shawn cannot swim he takes on the role of a spectator and watches his peers swim from the sideline.

Shawn's exclusion from recreation extends beyond his inability to swim as he is often excluded from free time activities at the home. Shawn's recreation participation with his peers is typically short lived, as the activities become a source of aggression where he is bullied and excluded. During the times when Shawn is in shared leisure activities, his peers call him names and try to hurt him physically. As a result, Shawn will leave the activity and watch his peers from the sideline or he will engage in a solitary activity parallel to his peers. Thus, shared leisure activities at the home can become a harmful context where Shawn is excluded or physically hurt.

Shawn reports that the restrictiveness of the home dictates the activities he can pursue and claims that this results in him encountering multiple barriers to recreation participation. The biggest barriers that Shawn faces are the policies at the home. Shawn is prohibited from leaving the property of the home and consequentially he can only participate in activities that are accessible on the property. The implications of being prohibited from leaving the property is problematic for Shawn as he reports that he typically uses time in the community to cool down when he is upset. Shawn captures the restorative nature of spending time in the community in the following sentiment, "*When I get mad sometimes I go down to the water and just relax because the water is soothing.*" Due to the restrictiveness of the home Shawn is unable to spend time in the community. Additionally, the policies at the home restrict the amount of time he can play videogames. Shawn shares his opinions about the policies in the following remark,

At home [referring to his family] is way better because I get to go out not like here I don't have any community time yet. [With community time] we get to go out for however long; it depends on what level we are on. I don't play videogames as

much as at home because we use the level system. The level system is about um you have 15 minutes if you're on level one, level two you get 30 minutes, level three you get 45 minutes and level four you get an hour.

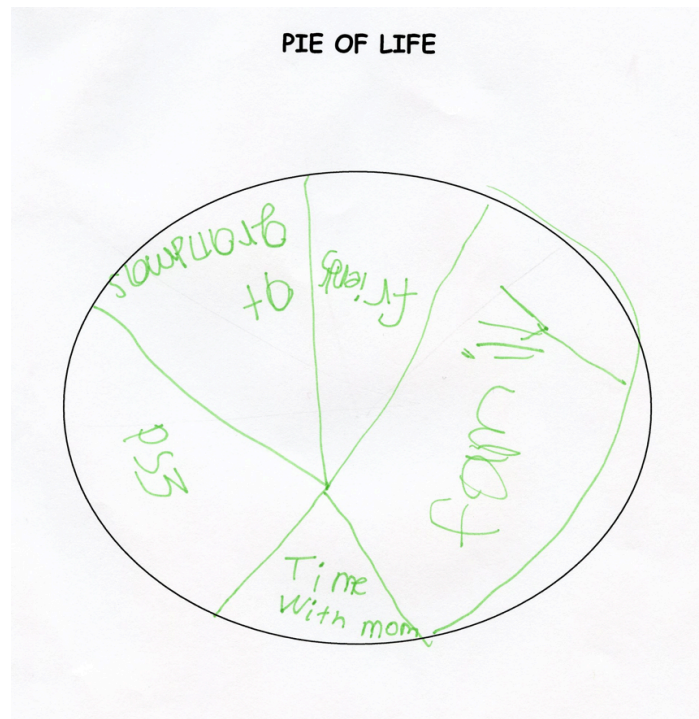
Shawn is restricted from spending his free time in the community and he is also restricted in terms of the activities he is able to engage in at the home, like computer games and videogames. Furthermore, the restrictive policies have a direct impact on Shawn's connections with the outside world as he states, *"Sometimes when I'm not allowed to go out, I kind of feel like alone because my friends that live down here, I really want to go out and see them and I'm not allowed."* The restrictions of the home constrain Shawn's ability to maintain contact with meaningful relationships in the community and this is unlike what he experiences when he is with his family. Shawn comments on a typical weekend in the following sentiment, *"I just spend my weekends with friends we go bike riding around."* Unlike when he is with his family, Shawn is unable to connect with his friends while at the home, which leaves him feeling alone.

In addition to limiting computer use and time in the community, the level system also outlines the times when the youth go to bed and this has an impact on their free time. Shawn claims that the staff at the home honours the level system and that they do not demonstrate flexibility when the youth request a later bedtime. At times the bedtimes clash with the programming and Shawn captures this in the following statement, *"I'd like to stay up later on weekends or something so we get to watch the full movie, not half of it."* Every Friday night the youth watch a movie together; however, Shawn reports that he is never able to watch the complete movie because of his bedtime. Although Shawn's recreation interests are limited while at the home he conveys that he is still engaged in

many favourite activities on the weekends, when with his family. Therefore, Shawn's leisure experiences are often fragmented and localized.

In the following activity Shawn was asked to record how he spends his free time.

Shawn's responses are listed below:



Interestingly, all of Shawn's recorded activities do not occur at the home as he indicates that he spends his free time with his family, friends, and playing PS3. Shawn comments on his responses in the following remark, *"This is a little much but I play PS3 a lot and I spend a lot of time with my mom and at my grandma's."* The relative importance of family for Shawn is further emphasized in the activity as four of his five leisure engagements occur within the context of his family. Furthermore, Shawn does not have access to a PS3 when he is at the home and as a result, he is limited to participating in this activity to when he is with his family.

Leisure expressions: Localized and fragmented. Shawn's leisure engagements are dialectical in nature as certain activities are restricted at the home yet encouraged by his family. When Shawn is with his family he is able to nurture many of his leisure interests that are prohibited at the home. As such, when Shawn is with his family on the weekends he spends his time in the community, often biking with friends. Shawn captures his experiences biking in the following sentiment, *"I went home Thursday until Sunday at my mom's. I went to chill with some friends we went for a bike ride, we drove our bikes all the way to [another city] on the bike trails and that's nothing compared to where I [usually] bike to."* Shawn claims that he typically spends his weekends biking with friends in the community. He reports that his family encourages him to go biking and that he often spends multiple hours of unsupervised time in the community, which is a direct contrast from his experiences at the home. Shawn comments on his leisure experiences with his family in the following statement,

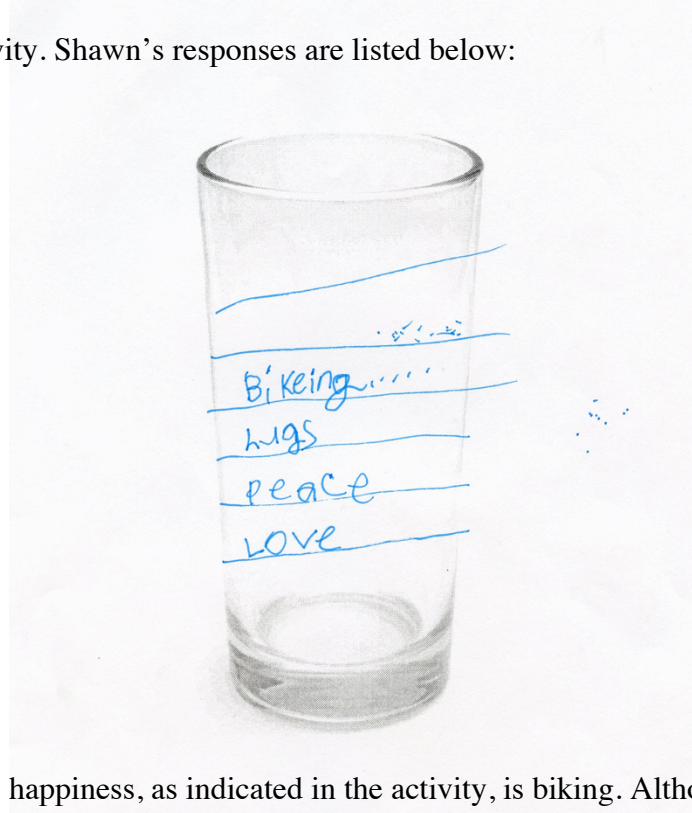
I'll just sit down and play on my mom's phone and then if she says do you want to go for a bike ride I'm like okay, I'll go. They just let me go out, say it's like one o'clock they say be back for supper and supper is at five. Sometimes they let me go to my friend's and sometimes they don't. Sometimes if they want me to go to my friends they'll say yes just to get me out of the house for a few hours.

Shawn is not allowed to go biking while he is at the home nor is he allowed in the community unsupervised. As a result, if he does ride his bike at the home he states, *"I just bike ride in the backyard."* Shawn reports that biking has been one of his longstanding favourite leisure activities yet this activity is not supported by the policies at the home. Furthermore, Shawn conveys that he looks forward to biking on the weekends

and that biking provides a context for him to connect with friends and develop himself.

Shawn captures the friendly and developmental nature of biking in the following statement, *“I sometimes go to the bike park with my BMX that I got for Christmas last year and I go see what the other kids are doing and I go and I want to try it.”*

In the following activity Shawn was asked to report on the activities in his life that generate positivity. Shawn’s responses are listed below:



Seminal to Shawn’s happiness, as indicated in the activity, is biking. Although biking is central to Shawn’s happiness he must modify his participation while at the home as reflected in his earlier sentiment, *“I just bike ride in the backyard.”* Despite this, Shawn reports that he spends the majority of his free time at home biking with friends. When describing his experiences biking Shawn reports that not being able to bike contributes to his unhappiness and states, *“My worst day was Wednesday, I asked to go for a bike ride and my grandma said no [it was a bad day] because I wanted to go for a bike ride.”* Beyond this, Shawn reports that hugs, peace, and love all contribute to his positivity. It

could be suggested that the care and support he receives from his family and the staff align with these aspects of his life. Yet, the violence that is implicit at the home may conflict with these needs as Shawn notes, *“Some of the kids, they will try and hurt you.”* Thus, while at the home, Shawn may not reap the full benefits of some of these happiness-generating experiences as he would if he was with his family.

In addition to riding his bike, Shawn is involved in cadets and he reports that this is an activity that is valued by him and his family. Shawn’s involvement in cadets has provided him with a connection to his past and future. In terms connecting to his past, Shawn reports that he was named after his grandfather who fought in the war. As such, he feels that his participation in cadets is a reflection of his grandfather. Furthermore, Shawn indicates that cadets has provided him with a valued direction and states, *“My grandma actually would like to see me in cadets; she likes to see my background as going into the army.”* In addition to making these connections Shawn reports that cadets is an enjoyable experience that he looks forward to each week. Shawn describes his experiences in cadets in the following sentiment, *“We do lots of fun things like this coming week we have tagging like we hand out tags with our number on it and everything and we try to bring people out like friends.”* Shawn’s involvement in cadets has provided him with a routine activity that connects him with peers and adult in a valued activity.

Although Shawn reports that he enjoys going to cadets he is fearful of the stigmatization that might occur if his peers were to find out that he is living at the home. As a result, he makes a concerted effort to conceal his identity as a youth living at the home. In an effort to maintain his anonymity Shawn requested that his grandparents drive him to cadets each week. Even though Shawn makes a conscious effort to hide his current

situation from his peers and leaders he reports that his grandmother informed the adult leaders about his situation. Shawn reports that his grandmother's decision to share his private information is upsetting and states, *"It makes me upset that they know I'm here because I don't like people knowing my personal information. [I worry] because they might think I have a problem and that I need help."* Shawn tries to keep his private life away from public awareness and he must manage his privacy when engaging in organized recreation.

Before attending cadets each week Shawn will play videogames at his grandparents' house and states, *"I play my PS3 a lot when I go home; before I go to cadets I will go on it about say from 2:30pm until 6:00pm. The games I play are MW and Call of Duty Warfare. I love playing videogames [they get out] all of my stress."* Shawn's involvement with videogames is yet another tension that he encounters between his leisure practices at the home and with his family as he is not allowed to spend multiple hours playing videogames at the home. Shawn's leisure engagements are highly localized and dialectical as the policies at the home conflict with his family's views on leisure. Therefore, Shawn must manage the expectations of multiple caregivers when considering how he will spend his free time.

Identity in a residential care context. Shawn describes himself as a person who loves music and skateboarding. In the following sentiment Shawn describes how he would introduce himself to someone he has never met before, *"Hi, my name is [Shawn], I like the band One Direction and Nickelback and I like mixing and matching the clothes that I've got. I'm 14 and I like to skateboard."* Shawn's self-description is telling of the value he places on his leisure interests as he defines himself by his taste in music and

skateboarding. In the following activity Shawn was asked to indicate his leisure interests over time.

Past	Present	Future
- Playing soccer - Spending time with family	- School - Long distance running	- Marathon running - Travel
Past	Present	Future
SKate Borde	Go Bike ride- Play video	Be a pro pro skate BORDER

Based on the activity, the relative importance of skateboarding in his life is clear as Shawn identifies skateboarding as an important part of his past and future. Although Shawn acknowledges his interest in skateboarding, he recalls that it is not a part of his current leisure profile. Shawn comments on his disengagement from skateboarding in the following remark,

I use to skateboard. I stopped cause I wasn't wearing a helmet and I tried going over a ramp and I pretty much cracked my head open. It was my choice to stop because I better be safe than sorry right? There's a saying be safe than sorry before you end up skateboarding somewhere and you fall and you pretty much kill yourself. Luckily my friends were with me.

Despite getting hurt skateboarding in the past, Shawn reports that he aspires to be a pro-skateboarder in the future. Judging by his other responses, it is clear that Shawn is an active person as the majority of his interests involve active recreation, such as skateboarding and biking. Furthermore, Shawn identifies with being an animal lover and states, *“I love dogs. Even though I’ve been bitten twice by dogs, I still like them.”* In addition to these leisure interests, Shawn also describes himself as a cadet. Shawn’s identity as a cadet is evident in his style as his hair is styled in a crew cut and he wears dog tags around his neck.

Beyond his leisure interests, Shawn reports that the perspectives of others also influence how he sees himself and he states, *“My teacher’s think I’m smart, actually, you know what, my first semester report card I got all straight As; I’m really smart.”* Furthermore, Shawn conveys that he worries about other people finding out that he is living at the home and the stigma that may follow. As such, Shawn makes a concerted effort to conceal his identity as someone living at the home as reflected in his earlier sentiment, *“I don’t like people knowing my personal information.”* Thus, it could be suggested that Shawn’s identity as a youth in care supersedes his other identities when it becomes a part of public knowledge.

In summary, Shawn’s story living at the home is fraught with tensions that he is expected to negotiate while living there. Integral to Shawn’s story are the unique constraints that he faces when accessing his preferred activities and friends. As such, while Shawn is living at the home he is often restricted from participating in his favoured activities in the capacity that he would like to. Shawn describes how living in a residential care context has played a seminal role in his identity development, as he is

unable to engage in many of his former leisure interests. Beyond this, he is fearful of the stigma that may follow if his peers and adult leaders in recreational activities find out that he is living at the home. As a result, Shawn is expected to alter how he expresses himself in public spaces in order to ensure his anonymity and this may impact his experiences in recreation.

Trevor's Portrait

Trevor is 13 years old and two months ago he moved to the home, which was his first encounter with Family and Children's Services and residential living. Trevor was moved to the home because he was lighting fires in the community and fighting with his mother. Although the home is located near his mother's house he rarely has the opportunity to visit her and states, "*[I'm only] allowed to see my mom for two hours every other weekend - like I don't get that but at the same time they tell me that it's because there's some problems. Why I came here, like I hit my mom and also cause I like playing with fire.*" Despite acknowledging the rationale for keeping him at the home Trevor contends, "*I think that's kind of dumb because I'm over doing that stuff. They don't trust me.*" As a result, Trevor is expected to spend his time on the property of the home and can only leave the property if accompanied by a staff member or parent.

Trevor's parents are separated and before moving to the home he was living with his mother. Trevor's mother works a low paying job and because of this his family struggles financially. Trevor is sensitized to the financial struggles of his family and reports that he compromises his leisure interests in light of his family's financial situation. Trevor acknowledges the repercussions of his family's financial difficulties in the following statement, "*[I] wouldn't get to do [fun things] often at mom's house because like sometimes she didn't have the money for that because she had to pay bills and all that.*" Due to the financial constraints of his family, Trevor was unable to enroll in organized activities and he rarely saw his father. Trevor reports that his father's absence was due to the need to make money, "*I have never been able to spend that much time with my dad because of him going out so much because he needs money.*" Since Trevor's

parents were both preoccupied with making enough money to survive, he was often left unsupervised and would spend his time playing videogames or lighting fires in the community.

Although the events that triggered Trevor's placement at the home are not unlike his peers, Trevor's physical characteristics are an obvious display of his differences. Trevor's family emigrated from Jamaica when he was young and he is the only ethnic minority at the home. In addition to being an ethnic minority, Trevor is overweight and he claims that this has made his transition to the home difficult. Trevor reports, "*They make fun of my weight and they call me fat and all that and like racial slurs and that's what I don't like about here.*" Because of this Trevor's experiences at the home revolve around feeling marginalized, oppressed, and isolated.

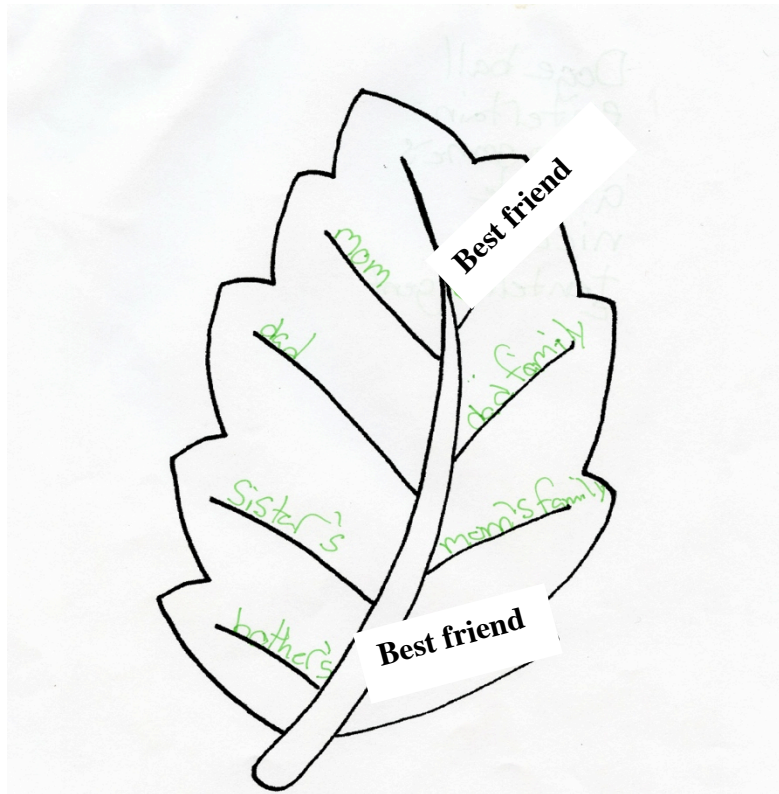
Predicting the unpredictable: Living in the midst of chaos. Trevor proclaims that the only predictable aspect of living at the home is that you can never anticipate what will happen. Trevor believes that the dynamics at the home are constantly in flux as they are dependent on the staff and youth who enter and leave the facility rather haphazardly. When commenting on the dynamics of the home Trevor states, "*Most of the time, like when some people aren't here, it's like really calm and it's nice, that's what I like.*" Despite brief moments of tranquility, Trevor reports that the home is typically a space where violence is nurtured and he believes that the violence is a product of ignorance. Trevor claims that his peers do not understand him and states, "*I think this place is cool but at the same time these kids that like don't understand why I'm here and they make fun of me so that's also why I don't like this place and I don't because of that reason.*" Trevor feels misunderstood by his peers and comments on how these misunderstandings

are exaggerated by his blatant physical differences. Consequently, Trevor claims that he feels alone at the home as he struggles to connect with his peers who are unsympathetic of his differences.

Being isolated from the inside out. Trevor's experiences of isolation are twofold. As mentioned, Trevor is the only ethnic minority living at the home and his peers frequently make derogatory comments about his race. The tensions that Trevor faces with regards to his race have contributed to him feeling different and alone while at the home. Additionally, Trevor has unique restrictions that leave him isolated from the outside world. Trevor is only allowed in the community for two-hour periods and consequently he encounters multiple degrees of isolation both inside and outside of the home. Trevor rarely interacts with his friends in the community and he is forced to spend his time with his peers at the home. Trevor indicates that the sole reason why he is isolated is because of the restrictiveness of the home. The relative impact of living at the home on Trevor's social connectedness is evidenced in how he is unable to maintain connections with friends he has had his whole life. Trevor comments on his inability to see his friends in the following sentiment, "*[My best friend] I've known him since I was a baby and uh we're really close but I haven't seen him in a while because I've been here and can't get to see him.*" Trevor's friendships have provided a consistent thread throughout his life and he reports that his friends have been a reliable source of support for him. Importantly, this support has been severed with his move to the home. Trevor tries to nurture his former relationships; however, the odds are against him as he is presented with multiple obstacles when trying to connect with friends. Trevor claims, "*[I] can't go on Facebook and all that stuff [and] that's pretty gay, if you want to contact your friends and see like*

what's their number you can't do that and most of the time if you're at school like you don't usually talk to them."

In the following activity, Trevor was asked to comment on his connections with meaningful people in his life.



Although Trevor frequently reports feeling isolated and alone, he was able to make note of multiple important people. In the activity, Trevor mentions that the members of both his immediate and extended family are important to him. Here, Trevor captures the value he places on his family and the important role they serve in his life. Trevor comments on his time with his family in the following sentiment,

I could schedule uh visits whenever I want but it's only two hours I'm allowed so like here – if I would like to say, if I wanted to go to my mom's or dad's house um

tomorrow that would be alright with them but I would only get two hours to go over there. We usually go out and like go like to the [mall] and go walk around [or] we drive around and talk and like for like the next hour we go at [my dad's] house or my mom's house and we talk.

Trevor also acknowledges the role that his extended family plays in his life and states, “*Most of the time they're most of them are in Jamaica cause [my dad's] from there and my mom's family I see most of the time because they live down here.*” Thus, Trevor claims that he has multiple positive connections with family members whom he can rely on; however, he is limited in the time he can spend with them while living at the home.

In addition to identifying meaningful family members, Trevor also acknowledges that he has a network of supportive friends. Trevor's ability to identify two friends suggests that he has the capacity for meaningful friendships as he states, “*I've known them [friends] since kindergarten.*” Although Trevor acknowledges his ability to develop strong and long lasting friendships he reports that living at the home has made it difficult for him to keep in contact with his friends. Trevor comments on the impact of maintaining his friendships in the following statement,

I'm trying to get his [friend] number so we can hang out and all that but he's not getting back to me. I don't know if he's been on Facebook in a while. I'm trying to get his number as soon as possible so I could go hang out with him.

In addition to this Trevor states,

You can't go, like you can't go out for a long as you want, and like do all that stuff. Like go see friends and all that because it might take twenty, like forty minutes to get there and you only get twenty minutes and then you have to walk back.

Even though Trevor describes having a robust social network, it is clear that living at the home has constrained his ability to maintain meaningful connections with friends and family.

Trevor's isolation from his peers is problematized by his fear that if they find out he is living at the home they will alter the way they think of him. Thus, Trevor makes a conscious effort to conceal his living situation from his friends. Trevor describes his efforts to hide his situation in the following sentiment, *"I ask if like the same staff could pick me up so they don't know and that sometimes works. I tell them that it's just my mom and most people don't know my mom so I just tell them that's my mom."* Thus, Trevor must negotiate between staying connected with his friends and safeguarding his privacy while living at the home. Trevor's efforts to maintain his anonymity have compromised his ability to connect with his friends.

In addition to this constraint, Trevor claims that he does not have the time to visit his friends as he once did when he was living with his mom. Trevor is not allowed to be unsupervised in the community and because of this he does not have the freedom to spend time with his friends. Trevor reports,

You're not allowed to see them [friends] for like as long as you want like you have a certain amount of time and that's what I think is stupid – like community time, you only get like an hour, you should be able to get like an hour or two to be able to go see your friends. But no, you can't, you can only have like an hour.

Like what if someone lives far away and it takes you an hour to get there?

Many of Trevor's friends do not live near the home and this has created a barrier for him to connect with them.

The relative importance of Trevor's social connectedness is demonstrated in his belief that central to his happiness are his connections to friends and family. In the following activity, Trevor comments on the aspects of his life that generate positivity.



Trevor reports that central to his happiness is seeing his mom, dad, and friends. It could be suggested that the restrictiveness of the home interferes with his happiness.

Furthermore, Trevor's isolation is perpetuated by the policies at the home that prohibit the use of social media. Since the use of social media is prohibited, Trevor's ability to connect with friends who live far away is further constrained. Not having access to friends has compromised Trevor's support network and he believes that his friends would

help him through this difficult period. Trevor's reliance on his friends for support is evidenced in his following statement,

[If the policies were different] you'd be able to contact your friends like if you're having a rough day like let's see like you're in a really bad mood and like you want to talk to somebody you could go on to the computer and talk to someone that you know and trust, [someone] that won't go out and tell everybody.

While at the home, Trevor's support system is restricted to the staff and youth in the building. Although there are many people available for Trevor to rely on, he indicates that he does not trust many of the staff and youth with his problems. Trevor states, "They're just staff, they just look after you, they don't do anything for you."

Power differentials: Feeling oppressed by staff. Integral to Trevor's experience at the home is how he feels powerless and silenced by the staff. Trevor struggles with the fact that he is often blamed for the misdoings of others and that he is powerless when trying to sway the opinions of staff,

If someone does something wrong everyone else gets in trouble for it, like for suggesting one day [some youth] were up because [a staff person] was working and they were asleep. [The youth] were doing some stupid stuff and then I woke up to ask what was all the noise and then I went back in my room and got a drink and then after that I come out um I come out and then I just sit there and I'm asking [staff] questions and I get blamed. I get blamed for most of the stuff and now [staff are] taking it out on everyone because some people didn't even come out of their room like some people didn't and they still get in crap. The people that

didn't do anything should be able to go on the computers and the Xbox but no nobody's allowed.

Trevor struggles with the practices at the home as he feels they are both oppressive and invasive. Trevor claims that the staffs' position of power keeps them in control and there is nothing he can do about it, "*If all the staff are like on you and all that, like you can't even do anything about it. If you call your mom like they probably won't even let you do that because they're so uh they're so sometimes mean.*" Furthermore, Trevor acknowledges that the staff are often unfair and inconsistent and states,

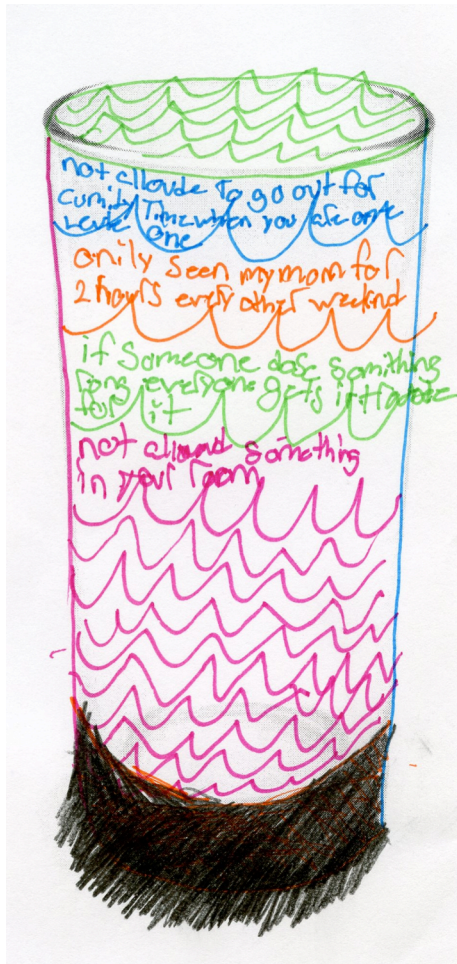
Like they don't allow us to like if I wanted to ask them they'd be like oh no you can't right now but yet as soon as another kid goes and asks they're allowed to but when we go and ask we're not allowed to so that's what gets me mad too because that's pretty gay and unfair

Although Trevor is relatively powerless to the staff and their demands he still tries to resist the practices at the home. Trevor captures how he resists the demands of staff in the following sentiment,

They have to search through your bag and your pocket before you come in from school and you have to roll up your um socks that's what gets me pissed off. It happens every day. You can't invade someone's personal stuff like and my mom's saying well it's their choice. Well I don't care it's my stuff, don't go searching through my stuff and most of the time I don't let them because I go straight to my room and they know that I don't so they just leave me alone but all the other kids they don't care, I do it's my stuff, I'm the type of guy who doesn't like when people go into my stuff.

Trevor describes his interpretation of the search policy at the home and how he feels it is invasive and disrespectful. Furthermore, he recognizes that his opinions about the search policy are unique when compared his housemates, yet valid in his eyes. Although Trevor resists being searched it is a part of the daily rhythms at the home. Trevor may resist the policy but he must resist it daily.

In the following activity, Trevor describes the aspects of his life that detract from his happiness. Here a common source of his unhappiness is the staffs' position of power.



The things that lead to Trevor's unhappiness include his inability to use his community time, only seeing his mom for two hours, getting punished for other's wrong doings, and not being allowed to have certain things in his room. All four of the issues raised by

Trevor intersect with the power struggles he has with staff. Trevor comments on the aspects of his life that cause him to be unhappy,

So not allowed to go out for community time on level one I hate that because um a couple times like about three times I went out for community time for level one and then last week all of a sudden the rules changed that we're not allowed going out for community time on level one but yet I did so many other times, that's pretty dumb. That's what got me mad too, it's not consistent.

Trevor reports that the limits setting by staff affects his happiness. Furthermore, he notes that the rules at the home are inconsistent and finds this upsetting. In addition to the limit setting and inconsistencies of the staff, Trevor comments on his inability to keep certain belongings in his room.

Another one is not being allowed some things in your room like cologne or if you want like a TV in your room to watch movies every night you're not even allowed doing that; that's pretty stupid and bull crap like people should be allowed to do that. Let's see like [one youth] his father gave him like this polar bear but was glass with a fish in it and apparently it's like magic well they took that from him and that's from his dad and they took it and put it in his box [in the office] what if he wanted that in his bedroom and not in his box. That's stupid, that's from his dad and he wants to keep it in his room; I feel bad for him because they're saying that he's not allowed having it well he should be allowed to if from his dad, it's from his family.

Trevor continues to describe his emotional reaction and resistance to the staffs' decision to confiscate gifts from home,

Oh you're not allowed anything heavy in your room I have so many things in my room that's heavy. My radio is heavy and they don't take that but yet they can take oh something from someone's dad. They're allowed taking something from someone's dad but not [their] radio there's so many other things heavy uh my bed is heavy they don't take that; my dresser's heavy, they don't take that but then they take other things. People want that [referring to things from family] and it makes you happy and I feel bad for him [referring to peer] because it did make him happy and now he's always mad here. I feel bad for the kid because I wanted to bring something from my dad that's heavy, but I'm not bringing anything from home that they can take.

In the above sentiment, Trevor captures his struggles with the staffs' decisions to apprehend his and his peer's personal belongings. Trevor refuses to bring keepsakes from his family into the home because he fears the staff will confiscate them.

Trevor's power struggles extend beyond his interactions with staff as he indicates that recreation and leisure also serve the dual nature where his autonomy is suppressed and also expressed.

Suppressing and expressing autonomy in leisure. Trevor acknowledges that living at the home has presented him with opportunities for leisure that he might not have had if he was still living with his mom. Trevor describes how the home has provided him with an opportunity to explore new leisure interests in the following sentiment,

This place is a good place and sometimes things can go like out of hand or wrong but you shouldn't worry about that just worry about yourself and you'll be fine. You get to do cool things here that you probably wouldn't get to do often at like

your mom's house. Like with my parents I've been to Jamaica and all that but like going out to the ROM or the museum I've never done that.

Trevor recognizes that a primary deterrent to him participating in leisure prior to coming to the home was his financial situation. He notes that the home has provided him with the financial support to engage in organized activities and claims to appreciate these new opportunities for leisure. Trevor acknowledges the different leisure experiences he is exposed to at the home in the following statement,

I want to [participate in recreation] but we don't have the money; me and my mom don't have the money to do that stuff so we just wait until we have enough money and then we do that stuff and once we do yeah that's basically all we do but since we're here now they're looking for signing me up for soccer or archery. Because my FACS worker is able to give me money to do that stuff.

Although the home has exposed Trevor to new opportunities for recreation, he also indicates that recreation can be space that is both oppressive and controlling. Trevor claims that he rarely has a say in the recreation activities offered at the home and states, “*I don't have any choice.*” Furthermore, he reports that the staff are often unsympathetic to the recreation needs of the group. Trevor captures his struggles with staff during recreation in the following sentiment, “*One thing we did was bowling, we went bowling with these big ass balls and yet down the other side there's these [smaller] balls and they make us use those [big] balls and yet the staff aren't even playing.*” Thus, Trevor captures a common tension in the recreation context as he attempts to negotiate his leisure needs within the staffs' authority.

Despite not having a lot of say in the recreation opportunities at the home, Trevor indicates that these experiences still serve a valuable role in his life. Trevor reports that his engagement in recreation breaks up the daily rhythms of life in pursuit of something positive,

Most people like doing things like going out like going swimming, bowling and all that because it makes them happy and all that. So... and it makes me happy too because like sometimes you're stuck here and you can't do anything, like the day goes over and over again, like you wake up, eat, go on the computer, get off, sit down and like do that over and over again and if you were to like get activity night like twice a week it wouldn't be that over and over again.

Trevor captures the repetitive nature of living in residential care and how this is especially true for those youth who are prohibited from leaving the property. Furthermore, Trevor reports that providing more opportunities for community recreation would benefit him and his peers living at the home and states, *"This place would be better if they by being able to go out more often like activity night like have that maybe twice a week."* Thus, recreation provides Trevor with a sense of novelty and excitement meanwhile breaking up his day with something positive in the community. Trevor describes a typical physical activity night in the following sentiment,

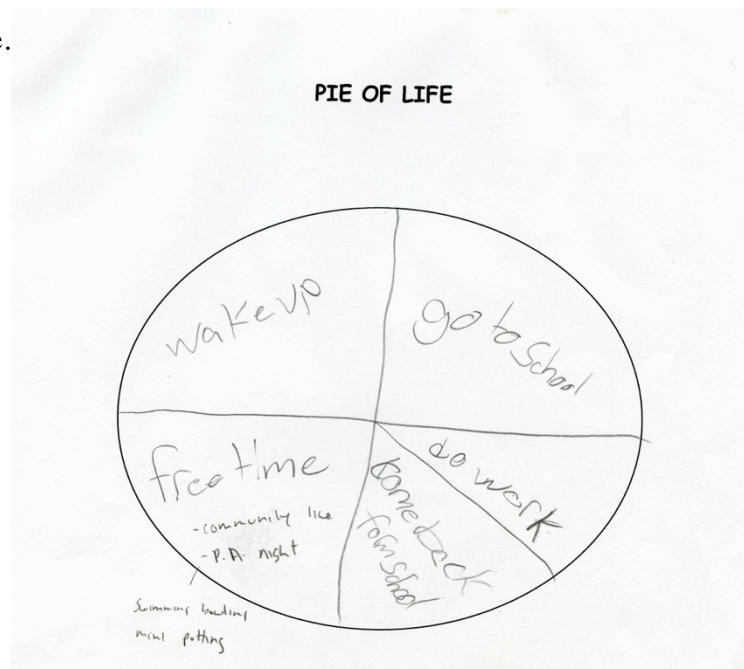
We go swimming so we leave at around 6:30pm when we get there sometimes we like go upstairs at the very top floor and run around and after that we swimming starts at 7:00pm and ends at 7:30pm so we have half an hour of swimming but I wish we had a longer time because it's kind of dumb how we have to... yeah that's

why in the summer if we go to the beach we have all day long and if we go to uh public a swimming pool we have all day long.

Trevor reports that he appreciates having the opportunity to go swimming yet he wishes that he had more time in the pool. As a result, he savours the anticipation of summer because he will have more opportunities for enjoyable activities.

Trevor reports that when he goes swimming he is able to connect with youth in the community and states, *"The staff stay out, they don't swim. They watch us but usually when we're there we play tag and it's very fun, very, very, very fun. We saw the same kid that we saw the last time we were there and that's who I play tag with."*

In the following activity, Trevor describes how he typically spends his days while living at the home.



Trevor reports that his days are comprised of his morning routine, going to school, and his free time. In the activity, Trevor states that the majority of his time is spent in school or school related activities. When describing his day Trevor states, *"I wake up, go to school, work at school, and then come back from school."* Trevor continues, *"I like to*

take my time getting ready and not be rushing like five minutes doing this, five minutes doing that, five minutes doing the other thing and then having to go no I don't like that."

Trevor commutes to school with another youth at the home and because of this his travel to and from school is extended, as he is the last to be dropped off and the first to be picked up. Some mornings are more hectic than others, especially if he has an altercation with the morning staff. Trevor comments on his morning routine in the following sentiment,

I should be waking up at 7:30 not 7:45 [and the staff say] well you have lots of time to get ready; no I don't, I leave with [another youth] every morning that's 7:50. I have ten minutes oh yeah five minutes to get ready hell no I'm not waking up and only have five minutes to eat get ready and brush my teeth that's not the same. I stayed out and I just sat there because I got pissed off because it's supposed to be 7:30 not 7:45 so I just sat there and waited until it was time for me to eat and when I ate after that I went to my room got dressed and then I brushed my teeth and we left.

Trevor would like to start his day off slowly, as evidenced in him giving his morning routine equal weight as his free time and time at school. However, depending on the dynamics at the home, his mornings may be rushed. Trevor comments on how he spends his free time in the following sentiment, *"If I was on level three I would go out for community time um if we had physical activity night I don't know what we would do, swimming, bowling, mini putting basically anything."* Importantly, Trevor's descriptions of his free time experiences are highly contingent of the home's expectations and restrictions.

The functions of recreation in Trevor's life extend beyond facilitating community engagement as it provides a space where he can express his autonomy during a time where he has little choice or control. Trevor is able to exercise control when participating in recreation as he states that he enjoys drawing because he has the creative license to draw whatever he wants. Furthermore, Trevor claims that he likes spending money for leisure on things that he finds desirable,

[I like when the staff lets you] go out and spend your money on things like whatever you want. Like we go to the [mall] sometimes and like buy things their at like different stores and we could go spend our money on lunch and all that and also like you could get like ice cream and lunch and buy things like whatever you want.

Recreation and leisure may be one avenue where Trevor can express his autonomy in a context that is autonomy suppressing. Trevor captures the importance of having control over his leisure engagements the following sentiment,

If we were to do something like a sport that I don't like it wouldn't change me if it's something new or something that I've never tried. If I have to then that would get me mad but if it was my choice then yeah. But if like the staff made me do it then yeah I would be pretty mad because it's my choice.

Trevor describes the importance he places on having choice in sport and recreation and expresses his struggles when the staff suppress his autonomy. As such, leisure can provide a forum where Trevor can take initiative; however, it may also provide a context that is highly controlled. Despite this, Trevor reports that sport participation is a valued

part of his identity as it provides him with an opportunity to express his strengths and talents.

Sport participation: Short lived yet forever remembered. Trevor is currently disengaged from organized sport yet he claims to have a strong athletic identity. Trevor indicates that he would like to become involved in an organized sport league; however, he must wait for his social worker to make the connections. Furthermore, Trevor previously relied on after school programs to facilitate his sport participation but since the government cut funding to his school's sport program he no longer participates in organized activities. Trevor captures the impact of government funding on his leisure in the following sentiment, *"I can't [participate in after school activities] because of the government what he did about no um what's it called no sports or anything after school, no after school things so yeah that's really stupid."* Since Trevor's social worker has yet to enroll him in a sport, his sport participation typically involves playing basketball or soccer in the backyard of the home or at school. Trevor states that his interest in sports is largely due to him thinking they are *"fun and cool"*. Despite his current disengagement, Trevor still remembers past positive experiences as a member of a sports team. Trevor captures a positive sport experience in the following sentiment,

I made the volleyball team and I was really happy. I've never made a volleyball team until that day. I was really happy and I told my mom and she was like congratulations it's the first time you've made it and I was like yep I'm really happy and she was like yeah you should be it's your first time making a team and then yeah it was really cool.

Although Trevor was only a member of his school's volleyball team for one season the positive experiences he attributes to that season have not been forgotten. The importance of being a member of sports team should not be overlooked, even if the experience was short lived. Trevor's involvement on his school's volleyball team prompted a positive dialogue with his mother that focused on his strengths and capacities as a volleyball player. Additionally, Trevor claims that his role on the volleyball team was a valued role by his peers, his mother, and most importantly him. Thus, he gained a valued social position through his participation on the team and this has become a valued part of his identity. Lastly, Trevor's position on his volleyball team elicited a time for him to feel proud of his accomplishments and identify as a competent volleyball player.

In the following activity, Trevor was asked to report on his past, present, and future free time engagements.

Past	Present	Future
- Playing soccer - Spending time with family	- School - Long distance running	- Marathon running - Travel

Past	Present	Future
Played football Spent time with family	School Plays sports	Go to the nfl

Trevor reports that he rarely spends time with his family and this is congruent with his earlier commentary about feeling isolated. However, a common thread in this activity is

Trevor's sport participation as he acknowledges that he formerly played football, continues to play sports, and aspires to play in the NFL. Thus, it can be suggested that Trevor's sport participation has afforded him some level of consistency in a time of relative transience. Furthermore, Trevor's aspiration to play in the NFL provides him with a valued direction and a goal to strive for. As such, it could be proposed that sports play a valuable role in Trevor's life and identity.

The developing identity. Trevor describes himself as athletic, entertaining, nice, and intelligent. When describing himself, Trevor notes that his identity is relatively static and states, *"I wouldn't care if [my peers saw me differently], who I am is who I'm going to be for the rest of my life."* Trevor claims that he identifies with the activities he pursues as they provide him with a source of continuity throughout his life. Trevor comments on his continued engagement in videogames in the following sentiment, *"I like videogames, I've always liked videogames and I would consider myself as a gamer. I basically spent all of my time playing video games, most of the time, if my mom kicked me off I'd go outside and hang out with my friends."* Beyond his leisure participation, Trevor states that his parents help facilitate his self-awareness,

I'm a kind person but not if you get me pissed off or mad, then I'm not nice. My parents say that I'm nice and an intelligent boy, like I could like do anything I want in the world and yeah whatever I wanted to do I could do it.

Trevor also comments on the staffs' perception of him and states, *"They think I'm a nice kid and I'm good."*

Even though Trevor acknowledges that his identity is static, he notes that the reason why he is living at the home is to improve and states, *"[The home is] nice at some*

points and there's kids that have disabilities and are here because they need help and to learn better of what they did to come here. I'm here because I need to like control my anger and all that." Thus, living at the home has prompted Trevor to consider the reasons why he is living at the home and to make the necessary improvements to return to his family. In addition to this, Trevor feels that his status living in residential care may influence other people's perspectives of him and he worries about being stigmatized. This is reflected in his attempt to conceal his identity by requesting that the same staff bring him to and from school. Although Trevor consciously tries to conceal his identity from his peers he claims that his friends have a good perspective of him and states, "*[My friends] think I'm a funny a funny person and cool to hang out with."*

Trevor's story highlights multiple junctures where leisure, identity, and the residential care context intersect. Importantly, he describes many facets about living at the home that impacts his leisure and identity. Trevor describes some tensions that he encounters while living at the home and how these tensions affect his overall experiences living there. Trevor conveys his concerns with not having much control over his life and how the restrictiveness of the home constrains his social connectedness and leisure participation. The impact of the restrictiveness of the home may be significant. Trevor describes how the rules of the home compromise his ability to engage in the activities that he identifies with and that make him happy. Although feeling restricted and controlled is central to his experience living at the home he also describes how living there has presented him with new leisure opportunities. Finally, he acknowledges that living at the home is intended to improve his problematic behaviours yet he conveys how living in

residential care puts him at risk of being stigmatized, which takes away from his sense of improvement.

Universal Portrait

The second level of my analysis involved creating a universal portrait that depicts the overall essence of the lived experience, as shared by the participants. Moustakas (1994) indicates that in phenomenology, data analysis begins with the creation of individualized representations of the participants' lived experience. Once completed, the individual's lived experiences are synthesised and consolidated to form a universal depiction of the shared essences of the phenomenon. The findings in this section are presented in a narrative format that overviews the experiences of the youth in the study. These findings materialized from my second phase of analysis where I analyzed the portraits based on the research questions. The individual lived experiences were distilled into a universal depiction and three broad themes emerged consisting of home, leisure, and identity.

Home – or something like it. Each of the six youth shared their unique experiences at the home and how they made sense of living in a residential care context. When describing their experiences in residential care they spoke candidly about how living at the home was like living in a state of flux and this impacted many aspects of their lives. Importantly, the youth described the unique tensions they encountered when negotiating between living at the home and with their families. They unanimously described how living at the home altered their lives by uprooting them from their communities of origin and planting them in a new community with new caregivers,

housemates, and friends. Interestingly, the youth discussed how the home is a unique space engendering many similarities to family life, yet being vastly different.

Like family, but NOT family. When describing the home the youth commented on their experiences with caregivers, both family and staff. Importantly, the youth shared about the unique tensions they encountered with staff members at the home, particularly in relation to the support and boundaries they received. When speaking about their experiences with staff, many of the youth shared stories about positive encounters that led to their growth and development. Parallels can be drawn between the positive commentary shared by staff at the home and what would be expected in a typical family context. Although some of the youth described positive encounters with staff, this was not a shared experience. Due to the staff schedule, the youth were exposed to multiple caregivers on a daily basis and consequently their experiences at the home varied with the staff entering and leaving the facility.

Many of the youth spoke about the power differentials implicit in their daily interactions with staff. Although there are power imbalances in all adult-youth relationships, the youth in this study determined that their relationships with staff were uniquely riddled with discourses of power. The staff, much like family, served the dual role of supporting youth outcomes and also limiting risk-taking behaviours by setting boundaries for acceptable behaviour. Although limit setting is a common parenting practice, the youth reported that they felt the home presented them with unique limitations unlike their experiences with their families. Differentiating staff from family was not the only part about living at the home that was different for the youth. When

describing the home, the youth unanimously reported that it is a place of aggression and violence.

Bullying and violence: A fact of life. All of the youth characterized the home as being a place that is fraught with violence and aggression. In many cases, the home itself perpetuated a cycle of violence as the youth reported feeling angry because of their current situation. When assessing the violence at the home, it is clear that the youth serve the dual role of victim and perpetrator as they transcended both roles rather fluidly. Although all of the youth participated in the violence at the home they also discussed their concerns about how the violence was policed. Many reported that the practices in place to address the violence are ineffective and contribute to the culture of violence at the home. Several youth claimed to feel that the staff do not take the bullying seriously and conveyed how the staffs' disregard perpetuated the violence at the home. Furthermore, the youth felt that the violence at the home was amplified by the restrictive policies that prohibited them from leaving the property. Consequently, the violence is relatively inescapable because the youth are unable to leave the home during times of heightened emotional states.

Segregation leads to isolation. The restrictiveness of the home not only constrains the youths' ability to remove themselves from violent situations, it also constrains their ability to maintain meaningful connections with the others. As such, important to the experience of living in residential care, in the opinions of the youth, was the varying degrees of isolation they faced. All of the youth commented in some respect about how living at the home severed their ties to the outside world. Some of the youth equated their experiences living at the home to being like living in a jail where they are

disconnected from the important people in their lives. When describing the restrictiveness of the home many youth declared that they could no longer rely on friends who provided them with a consistent source of support throughout their lives. Many described how their support networks were limited to the people physically available at the home and this was problematic for some.

When describing their living situation the youth reported feeling as if a part of them was planted in their community of origin and another part was planted in the community where the home was located. As a result, none of them felt fully grounded in either community. The youth spoke about how they recognized that their worlds back home continued while living at the home and this puts a strain on their relationships. Many spoke about how their move to the home dissolved their ties with former friends and prompted new connections with the youth at the home. Although living at the home provided an opportunity for the youth to connect with each other many questioned the authenticity of these friendships. The youth described how their peers at the home serve the dual role of friend and bully and this made them question if these friendships were genuine. As such, the youths' friendships at the home were somewhat contrived and motivated by proximity and accessibility.

Given the stories shared by the youth, it is clear that there are many elements of the residential care context that cause it to be unlike what they experienced when living with their families. While living at the home, the youth are exposed to multiple caregivers that come into and out of their lives rather haphazardly. Additionally, the home evoked a state of isolation where the youths' robust social networks tapered down into smaller networks accessible within the confines of the home. Importantly, just as the residential

care context impacted the youths' experiences with family and friends it impacted their leisure experiences. The youth reported that living at the home reshaped their leisure, as they are required to fit their leisure interests into the expectations of the home. As a result, leisure within a residential care context is distinctly different from leisure within a typical family context.

Leisure – or is it. When discussing the intersection of living in residential care and leisure, the youth described multiple factors implicit to the experience of living in residential care that complicate their leisure experiences. The youth reported that living at the home presents them with unique complexities that alters their leisure and transformed how they spent their time while at the home. When describing these complexities the youth spoke about how the experience of living in residential care challenged many of the traditional ways of defining leisure. The youth reported that their leisure was contingent on the home and that leisure within a residential care context was fraught with constraint, it was fragmented, and used as a space for both positivity and violence.

Living at the home: Unique constraints on leisure. The youth unanimously reported that living at the home presented them with unique constraints on their leisure that they might not have experienced otherwise. When describing these constraints, they reported that the restrictiveness of the home was a primary barrier that kept them from engaging in certain leisure activities. The youth described how the policies at the home require them to go through multiple channels of approval before engaging in certain activities, especially those that occur in the community. Consequently, living at the home suppresses their ability to maintain engagement in former leisure activities they once identified with. Additionally, the youth reported that the schedule at the home distinctly

impacts their leisure. Many commented on the routine of the home and how it is overly programmed, limits their free time, and dictates the leisure they can pursue.

Beyond the restrictiveness of the home, many of the youth indicted that their peers often constrain their ability to engage meaningfully in certain leisure activities. Many shared how the private issues of one youth often lead to the public consequences for the entire group. As such, if a youth acts out the entire group will get punished and this typically involves restricting access to leisure. Some shared about the aggressiveness of the home and how they sequester away in their rooms to avoid confrontation and this ultimately impacts their leisure experiences. Other youth spoke about the chaotic nature of the home and how it interfered with their ability to enter the mental state necessary to engage in certain leisure activities.

Finally, fundamental to the intersection of living in residential care and leisure was how the residential care context suppressed the youths' ability to act autonomously in their leisure. When commenting on the lack of choice at the home, the youth felt voiceless in their leisure, albeit wishing that they could voice their interests. Suppressing the autonomy of the youth can be especially problematic if the staff fail to acknowledge the unique leisure needs that each youth possesses. The youth brought with them to the home a breadth of leisure interests, skills, and fears that impact their leisure experiences. Some of the youth reported that the staff neglect to acknowledge their leisure needs and this made them feel uncared for. Thus, for some, leisure was a harmful context where their needs were neglected by staff. Conversely, leisure also provides moments of positivity while living in residential care.

The duality of leisure: A context for happiness and harm. The relationship between leisure and residential care is not easily discerned as evidenced by the youths' sentiments. The youth described how their leisure occupies multiple and conflicting roles and how it serves the dual purpose of providing them with moments of positivity and harm.

The youth articulated how they derive significant benefits from their leisure and fundamental to this is the ability to escape the realities of daily life. When describing the role of leisure in escaping the realities of living in residential care the youth commented on several factors which allowed this to happen. Recreation and leisure plays a fundamental role in breaking up the daily rhythms of life by physically removing the youth from the home in pursuit of something positive. Others described how certain activities, albeit occurring within the home, allow them to escape the repetitiveness of living in residential care by focusing on the activity. Additionally, several youth conveyed that their leisure experiences anchored them during this period of heightened transiency. For example, many reported that the activities maintained throughout their transition to the home instilled them with a sense of continuity as the activities provided them with a connection to their past, present, and future.

Although the youth described their ability to transcend the miseries of living in residential care through leisure they also recognized its role in providing a forum for violence. Thus, just as leisure provided the youth with interludes of positivity it exposed them to conflict and harm. Many of the youth described how shared leisure activities often became a contentious space rife with hostility and aggression. Others described how sport and recreation provides an appropriate space to act on their aggressive tendencies.

Localized leisure: Altering interests to suit the context. Many of the youth commented on the instability of their lives as their time was shared between living at the home during the week and with their families on the weekends. Interestingly, their leisure experiences were similarly fragmented because they had to alter their leisure to suit whichever context they were in. The youth explained how the rules at the home are different from the expectations set out by their families. Consequently, their leisure experiences were vastly different between the two contexts. The youth reported that the constraints of the home cause them to replace their preferred leisure with activities available at the home. As a result, many had to wait to be with their families before they could engage in the meaningful activities they once pursued. Conversely, other youth shared how living at the home presented them with new opportunities for leisure that they might not have experienced if they were not living at the home.

In summary, the residential care context reshaped the leisure experiences of the youth in ways that were unique to the home itself. The youth described how they encountered unique constraints on their leisure that were unlike what they experienced living with their family. As such, the restrictiveness of the home, paired with the unique group dynamics, made it difficult for them to maintain engagement in certain activities. The youth also described how their leisure took on new forms, as it provided a context where they could experience positivity and also express their anger. Importantly, just as living in residential care reshaped the youths' leisure it also reshaped their identities.

Identity – who am I. The youth spoke candidly about the unique negotiations they faced while navigating their identities in a residential care context. They described how the identity development process was a shared experience, coupling their own

understandings of who they are along with the perspectives of those in their immediate communities. The youth recognized that the people within the confines of the home played a seminal role in their self-understandings, as they felt significantly isolated from the outside world. To a lesser degree, they acknowledged the role that other people in their immediate communities played in their developing identities.

The private self: Negotiating disparate aspects of self. When talking about the intersection of living in residential care and identity the youth unanimously described how their identities were in a state of flux, much like their living situation. Importantly, the youth portrayed a struggle they faced while navigating the dialectical tensions between two disparate identities, one of self-stigmatization and one of self-improvement. The youth reported that living at the home prompted a unique internal dialogue that centred on the problems that led to their placement at the home. Consequently, many self-stigmatized, labeling themselves as bad people, and spoke candidly about their aspirations to become improved versions of their old selves. In addition, the youth spoke about how the agenda of the home was relatively transparent in that it is intended to address their problematic behaviours. Several of the youth described how they felt the need to fix the aspects of themselves that related to their placement at the home in order to return to their families. As a result, living at the home triggered many of the youth to engage in a distinct process of identity work that they might not have experienced otherwise.

Although the transparency of the home's intentions provided some youth with the direction needed to improve, it also caused many to feel poorly. Many of the youth described how living at the home, with its focus on betterment, caused them to feel like

something was fundamentally wrong with who they are. Thus, living at the home encouraged many of the youth to improve, which made them feel good in the aftermath. Conversely, it also prompted them to consider their faults, which caused them to feel poorly about themselves. It could be suggested that living at the home caused the identities of the youth to be in a state of limbo where they were caught in between self-betterment and self-reproach.

The public self: Fear of stigmatization. The youth spoke in varying degrees about the pervasiveness of their identity as a youth living in residential care. They frequently commented on their sensitivity to the public's awareness of their identity and their fear of being stigmatized by. Many of the youth conveyed how they altered the ways in which they performed their identities in public spaces, especially their identity as a youth in care. The youth made a concerted effort to hide who they are, even hiding important information about themselves from their intimate relationships. Therefore, it could be suggested that the fear of being stigmatized significantly impacted the youths' connectedness with others. The youth shared several accounts of being discriminated by the public for living in residential care. Some shared about how organized recreation became a combative space where they were treated differently and poorly for living at the home. Others talked about their anticipation of being stigmatized in organized activities and how they made a conscious effort to hide personal information from their peers and adult leaders.

The institutionalized self: The impact of congregated living. The youth unanimously commented on the important role that their caregivers and housemates played in their identities. It is clear that the home provides a distinctive space where

identities are cultivated in light of the staff and youth at the home. Many of the youth spoke about the influence of their housemates on their developing identities, especially when considering the violent discourses at the home. The youth shared how their experiences with bullying interfered with their self-concept as they internalized some of the negative commentary of their peers. They also identified how their interactions with caregivers sometimes mediated the hurtful comments of their peers. Some youth described how staff at the home validated aspects of themselves and also shed new light on things they had never considered. Although the staff played an important role in assisting the youth with developing positive identities, some youth felt labeled by the staff and this contributed to them developing maladaptive identities.

Finally, the youth shared stories about how living at the home caused them to become less unique and more like their peers. The youth conveyed how they lost contact with many of the important people in their lives and developed new friendships with their peers at the home. Moreover, the restrictiveness of the home constrained their ability to act on their unique leisure interests as their leisure was often based on programmed activities. Living at the home impinged on the youths' ability to express their individuality in leisure as the majority of their leisure was scheduled and group-based. As a result, the youth became more alike than different and this may have contributed to an institutionalized identity.

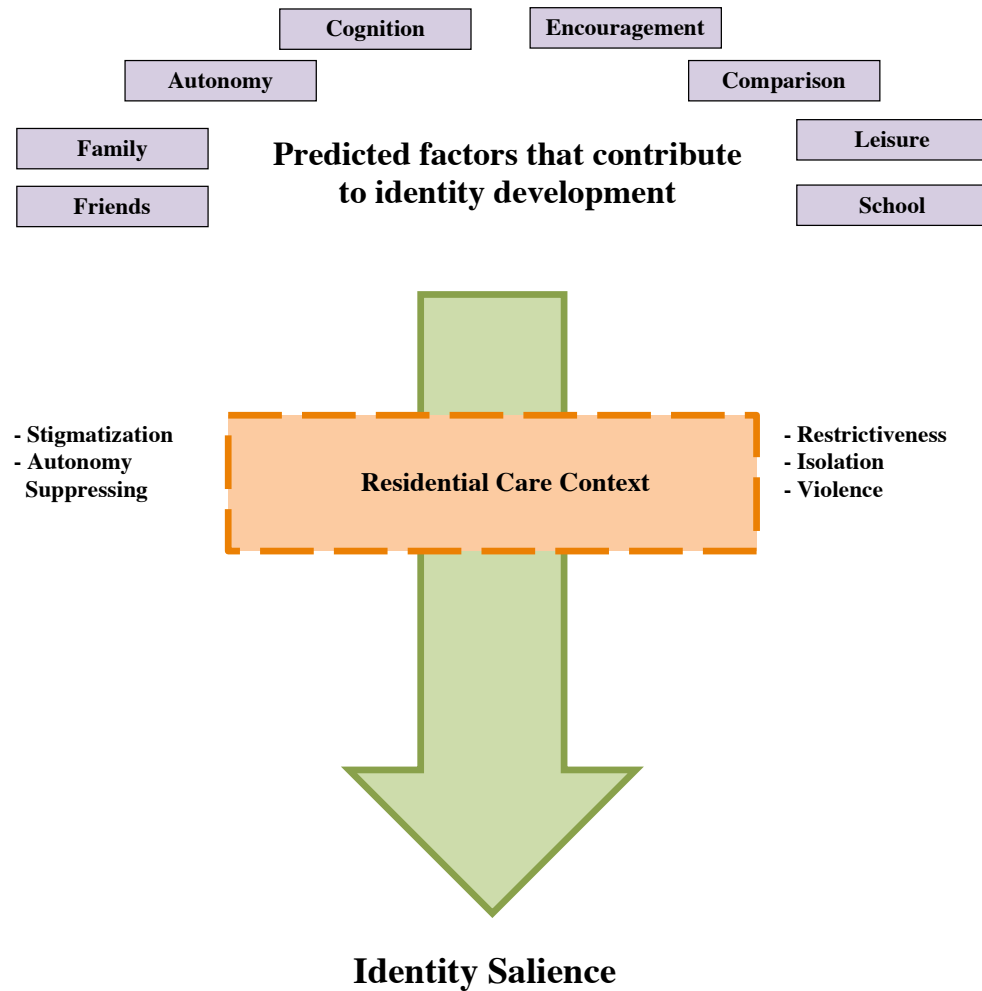


Figure 1. Adolescent identity development in residential care.

The above figure depicts the process that the youth in this study followed when cultivating their identities in a residential care context. The youth described how the predicted factors that influence identity development (determined from my literature review and conversations with the youth) intersect with the residential care context (defined as stigmatizing, autonomy suppressing, restrictive, isolating, and violent). Living in residential care impacted the youths' identities and altered the factors that influence identity development. Consequently, the youth engaged in a unique process of identity work that was specific to the home where they lived.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This study explored the lived experiences of six youth living in a residential care context. The purpose of the study was to explore the intersection between living in residential care, leisure engagement, and adolescent identity development. The youth spoke openly about how living in residential care played a central role in managing all aspects of their lives, especially their leisure and identity. As such, I felt it suitable to use the residential care experience as a framework for the discussion chapter. During my interactions with the youth, they described several qualities that were integral to their experiences living at the home. This chapter will use the qualities of the residential care experience, as outlined by the youth, to guide the discussion.

The origins of the characteristics used to frame this chapter came from my third wave of analysis. During this phase of analysis, I went back to the individual portraits and the universal depiction to extrapolate the qualities that represented the essence of living in residential care. I read through the portraits several times and was sensitized to the descriptors that the youth used to define their experiences living at the home. This phase of analysis was bracketed by the central research questions, as I was particularly interested in the essences of the residential care experience that intersect with leisure and identity. The qualities used to frame this chapter were the most frequently reported qualities by the youth and the most relevant to the central research questions. My analysis resulted in five central characteristics that defined the shared experience of living in residential care known as: restriction, isolation, lack of autonomy, violence, and stigma. This chapter will describe the five qualities outlined by the youth and their intersection with leisure and identity.

Restriction

Central to the experience of living at the home, in the opinions of the youth, were the varying degrees of restriction that they faced. The youth spoke candidly about the restrictiveness of the home and how it impacted their social connectedness and leisure experiences. Several youth described their distaste for the restrictions at the home and how they kept them from engaging in valued activities. Although few spoke positively about the restrictions they faced, some research suggests that youth living in out-of-home care may require additional restrictions in order to succeed. Ringle, Huefner, James, Pick, and Thompson (2011) found that different youth living in out-of-home care have different restrictive needs and state, “if the child's behavioral and mental health needs require a more intense intervention, the least restrictive placement many times is not the most appropriate placement” (p. 675). It is important to recognize that extreme cases of maltreatment, trauma, and risk taking that lead to placement in out-of-home care may merit more extreme restrictions. As such, the restrictions bestowed upon youth living in residential care needs to be viewed from both perspectives: first, as a necessary part of treatment and care, and second, as an unnecessarily punitive approach to managing youth in residential settings.

Although the literature justifies the use of restrictions in residential care most of the youth in this study felt contrary to this perspective. Many reported that the home imposed several restrictions that impacted their daily lives such as early bedtimes, prohibiting the use of social networking (Facebook and Tumblr), prohibiting community access, and limiting cell phone use. When describing these realities they acknowledged that some restrictions were not conducive to their developmental needs and consequently

left them feeling isolated and controlled. These findings are consistent with Raukti and colleagues' (2011) research on restrictiveness in residential care. Rauktis et al. (2011) found that restrictiveness plays an influential role in managing social connectedness and leisure engagement. They capture the impact of restrictions on youth outcomes in the following statement,

Some of the rules felt to be developmentally inconsistent for teenagers included obtaining permission to go to the bathroom, asking for access to food, not being able to choose leisure time activities, and not being able to attend group activities such as parties or the prom with other teenagers. (p. 1228)

Rauktis et al. (2011) also found that youth living in highly restrictive homes are more likely to experience boredom during free time and this is consistent with the youth in this study. Many of the youth conveyed how the restrictiveness of the home moderated their daily lives and described how life at the home was repetitive, mundane, and isolating. Interestingly, leisure played an important role in mitigating the repetitiveness of the home and took on an instrumental and therapeutic role in their lives. The youth acknowledged that positive leisure experiences facilitated their ability to escape the realities of living in residential care. Legault and Moffat (2006) explored the positive life events of youth living in out-of-home care and found that leisure activities were the most frequently cited source of positivity. Additionally, they discovered that leisure provides an ideal context for youth to experience social connectedness, positive self-esteem, and a sense of mastery. This corroborates with Gallagher and Green (2012) who found that leisure provides youth with a source of positivity and social connectedness and

McGinnity (2007) who reports that leisure can assist youth with adapting to residential living.

These findings are also consistent with Gilligan's (2000) work on leisure, resilience, and adolescence. Gilligan (2000) states, "evidence seems to underline the importance for those children who experience adversity at home to have havens of respite or asylums in other spheres of their lives" (p. 38). This is in keeping with the findings of this study as the youth unanimously described the value of leisure in providing them with moments of positivity and escape. Consequently, this may make leisure a potentially optimal life sphere for young adults to experience positivity in light of the stresses associated with living in residential care. Gilligan (2000) continues on to state, "reducing even by one the number of problem areas in a child's life may have a disproportionate and decisive impact" (p. 38). Thus, the positive experiences that the youth ascribe to their leisure, albeit fleeting at times, may contribute to experiencing a positive upward spiral of development.

Although the youth portrayed the value of leisure in providing them with moments of positivity they also expressed having unique constraints on their leisure. When describing these constraints, the youth indicated that their leisure was contingent on the home and that the rules and restrictions, peer dynamics, and schedule influenced their leisure experiences. The barriers that the youth faced are consistent with contemporary research. Gallagher and Green (2012) found that strong protectionist discourses are not always supportive of the leisure needs of youth and state, "young adults were critical of the opportunities they had for developing friendships and also of their chances to engage in 'normal' community-based activities more generally" (p. 335).

Thus, certain restrictions may limit harm and risk taking yet they might also limit access to friendships and positive leisure experiences.

Restricting access to leisure outside of the home may have significant implications for identity development. Many scholars posit that leisure provides an ideal context for young adults to explore various identities and interests in a relatively inconsequential fashion (Duerden, Widmer, Taniguchi & McCoy, 2009; Hansen, Larson, Dworkin, 2003; Kelly, 1983; Kleiber, 1999). Hansen et al. (2003) found that leisure is an important component of adolescent identity development and state, “adolescents try out different youth activities as part of their identity exploration” (p. 27). However, if young adults are restricted from opportunities for self-exploration in leisure they might not reap this benefit. Thus, youth living in hyper restrictive homes may experience leisure and identity development differently than individuals living in less restrictive places. Gilligan (2008) found that restricting access to meaningful roles could significantly impact adolescent identity development and that recreation can provide an important context for identity work and states,

The social roles played by a person underpin the person’s identity and sense of self. There is a risk that people in adversity may have a restricted range of socially valued roles, and may instead develop a stigmatised and, ultimately, all-embracing master identity such as ‘young person-in-care’. (p. 40)

Thus, being involved in a variety of different activities may afford youth with opportunities to experience valued identities while mitigating the likelihood of developing a master identity as a youth in care. This is in line with Nightingale and Wolverton’s (1993) findings on the impact of adolescent rolelessness. However, the

potentialities for leisure to afford young adults with multiple valued roles are evidenced in the literature (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Kelly, 1983; Kleiber, 1999).

In addition to experiencing restrictions to valued roles, the youth also spoke about how certain restrictions made it difficult to maintain valued activities. Kleiber (1999) explored leisure across the lifespan and found that leisure activities can provide people with a sense of continuity over time. The potentials for leisure to instill continuity in the lives of youth living in out-of-home care are evidenced in the remarks of the youth in this study. Some of the youth conveyed how certain activities important to their identities (blogging, skateboarding, cycling) were restricted at the home and this may have impacted their sense of continuity. Other youth described the important role that leisure played in providing them with a level of continuity while living in residential care. The youth shared how certain activities provided them with a common thread across time and place; helped them cope with adjusting to life at the home; and made their uncertain futures seem less ambiguous.

The role of leisure in facilitating continuity may contribute to the burgeoning body of literature on the pathways to permanence in child welfare. Gilligan (2004) describes permanency in the following statement “permanence needs to be considered in terms of two different axes – stability (staying put) and continuity (staying connected)” (p. 25). Brown, Leveille, and Gough (2006) contribute to the discourse on permanency and state that three pathways to permanence exist which include physical, emotional, and legal permanence. They describe the three dimensions of permanence in the following quote “emotional permanence is the attachment children [youth] feel for others. Physical permanence occurs when a child [youth] has a stable and continuous living arrangement,

and legal permanence refers to a variety of legal orders, including adoption” (p. 97). The importance of permanence in child welfare is evidenced in the literature that emphasizes the imperative for youth living in out-of-home care to achieve some degree of continuity (Brown et al., 2006; Samuels, 2009; Sanchez, 2004). Furthermore, practitioners are encouraged to make permanence planning an integral component of their work with youth living in out-of-home care.

Interestingly, little has been done to explore the relationship of leisure in assisting youth living in out-of-home care achieve some level of permanence. The youth in this study described how leisure was a crucial part of them experiencing continuity and conveyed that certain policies made it difficult for them to experience continuity in leisure. The youths’ discourses on leisure, restriction, and permanence may suggest that leisure is an optimal pathway for young adults in child welfare to achieve a level of permanence.

Isolation

Another quality that the youth used to describe their experience living in residential care was isolation. All of the youth described how certain policies at the home segregated them from the outside world and consequently made them feel isolated. The youths’ experiences with segregation and isolation corroborate the work of Samuels (2009) who discovered that living in out-of-home care perpetually disrupts the youths’ connections with important people. Furthermore, Mason (2008) found that youth living in residential care place particular importance on maintaining connections with important people and having commonalities with others. Consequently, Manson (2008) argues for

the inclusion of policies in out-of-home care that support the enhancement of interpersonal connectedness.

The isolation that the youth in this study experienced varied as some described how they had no connections outside of the home whereas others described having friends but not being able to access them. All of the youth spoke about their desires to spend more time with the important people in their lives. Some youth conveyed how it is an adolescent's rite of passage to be social and how living at the home altered this developmental path. Marcia (1980) captures the importance of social connectedness during adolescent identity development in the following statement

What is important about identity in adolescence, particularly late adolescence, is that this is the first time that physical development, cognitive skills, and social expectations coincide to enable young persons to sort through and synthesize their childhood identifications in order to construct a viable pathway towards their adulthood. (p. 110)

Marcia (1980) asserts that adolescence is the first developmental period where one's physical, cognitive, and social skills coincide making it a critical period for identity development. Marcia's (1980) projected development trajectory does not capture the unique experiences of the youth in this study. Several youth commented on how their social skills were lagging and how they felt that being sequestered away at the home caused these skills to lag. Consequently, the youths' social skills did not necessarily triangulate with their cognitive and physical development at this particular time and this may have impacted their identities.

Adolescence does not happen in a vacuum and many of the youth expressed how

they require a diverse network of supports to help them through this difficult time.

Davidson, Haglund, Stayner, Rakfeldt, Chinman and Tebes' (2001) research captures the importance of meaningful connections. Davidson et al. (2001) found that social connectedness is central to experiencing wellbeing and recovering from mental illness. Despite this, many of the youth conveyed that the policies at the home made it difficult for them to seek counsel from people outside of the home. Several youth stressed how limiting their support to people physically available at the home is not conducive to their developmental needs and that they require an array of supports in their lives. The youths' experiences with isolation are consistent with the literature that highlights the impact of out-of-home care on social connectedness (Lenz-Rashid, 2009; Samuels, 2009; Sanchez, 2004; Semanchin Jones & LaLiberte, 2013).

Many youth disclosed that they replaced many of their old inaccessible friends with their peers at the home. They described how their social connections were primarily based on proximity and how they questioned the authenticity of their friendships at the home. Han and Choi (2005) found that youth living in institutionalized settings exhibit significantly higher levels of loneliness when compared to their home-reared counterparts. Han and Choi (2005) describe the relationship between residential living and social connectedness in the following statement "it is not likely that the quality of their [youth] interactions with people inside and outside of institutions is sufficient, despite living in large groups." (p. 542). Finkelstein (1991) corroborates and states that youth living in residential care experience diluted social connections and difficulties maintaining connections with positive adult figures.

Only two of the youth participants were engaged in organized activities outside of

the home during the time of the study. Consequently, many of the youth were unable to reap the benefits of being connected with others in valued leisure activities. The move to the home severed several of the youths' involvement in organized recreation and they lost connections with meaningful people such as coaches and teammates. Depriving youth of meaningful connections in organized activities may significantly impact their wellbeing and resilience (Gilligan, 2008; Legault & Moffat, 2006; Flynn, Beaulac, & Vinograd, 2006). Martin and Jackson (2002) capture the ability of leisure to facilitate social connectedness in the following statement,

The risk of disruption is so high for most young people in care that they need to develop a network of supportive relationships which can provide a point of reference and a sense that somebody cares about them and their progress. One important way that this can happen is through activities and leisure pursuits. (p. 123)

Similar to Martin and Jackson (2002), Gilligan (2008) found that social connectedness is important and that living in residential care jeopardizes the breadth of one's social world, stating,

In the case of young people in extended care, network members are likely to be drawn initially from their carers, while also hopefully still including at least some members of their family of origin. But the reach of network membership will hopefully stretch beyond family and carers to include members from other domains including school, recreation and work.

Social connectedness should be a valued and supported outcome for youth living in out-of-home care and leisure may be one avenue to achieve this outcome. The youth in this

study were mostly disengaged from community-based activities and this may have contributed to their isolation.

Being socially disconnected may have direct implications for identity development as Turner et al. (1987) assert that a large part of one's self-concept is their affiliations with social groups. Tanti and colleagues (2011) corroborate and state that, "group identity becomes a dominant theme in early-adolescence, as young people strive to achieve a sense of belonging within a valued social group" (p. 555). This is consistent with Hogg's (2004) findings that suggest that social groups are an important part of one's identity and restricting access to these groups may interfere with identity development. Additionally, Hogg (2004) found that individuals are more likely to experience in-group salience if their exposure to multiple social groups is limited. Thus, it could be suggested that the extremely isolated youth in this study might be at risk of developing a master identity as a youth in care based on their limited access to various social groups.

It is clear that social connectedness is an important part of identity development and that being socially excluded will impact certain identity outcomes. The majority of the youth in this study were disengaged from organized activities and these activities may be especially important when combating the master identity as a youth in care. Turner et al. (1987) indicate that social identities are acquired based on two criteria, accessibility and fit. As such, people identify with the groups they can assess and those that fit with their values and beliefs. Given the versatility of leisure, it may be an ideal context for youth to access meaningful activities that coincide with the essential aspects of themselves. Furthermore, between 40 and 50% of adolescent time is spent in leisure (Larson & Seepersad, 2003) and given that leisure is inherently social this makes it an

even more important space to develop valued connections. The ability for leisure to support social connectedness may be especially important for youth living in out-of-home care who have endured multiple disrupted relationships with peers and adults.

Lack of Autonomy

Another important aspect of living at the home was how the youth felt that their autonomy was largely suppressed by the policies and practices in place. Contemporary research in child welfare emphasizes the importance of viewing youth as active agents of their own development (see Gilligan, 2008; Mason, 2008). Placing extreme controls on youth may be contrary to this assumption as it devalues their role as their own agents of change. Furthermore, autonomy has been described as an integral component of identity development (Caldwell & Smith, 2006; Marcia, 1980; Soenes, Berzonsky, Dunkel, & Papini, 2011). Soenens et al. (2011) found that autonomy is a seminal component of identity development and that supporting youth autonomy is central to positive identity outcomes. Their findings suggest that when youth are provided with an appropriate balance of autonomy and supervision they are more likely to develop strong adaptive identities. Conversely, they found that when autonomy is suppressed youth are less likely to engage in the self-exploration necessary for healthy identity development. The following quote captures the important role that autonomy plays in adolescent identity development,

It appears that perceiving one's parents [caregivers] as being manipulative and controlling contributes to the adoption of a maladaptive orientation to the task of identity formation. Such parenting may discourage the deliberate and thoughtful exploration of one's personal interests and increase fear of failure and pervasive

doubts about one's capacities. (Soenens et al., 2011, p. 204)

Although the youth described how the home exposed them to multiple restrictions that suppress their autonomy it is important to acknowledge that the extreme cases that brought them to the home may merit extra controls. Many of the youth were afforded a significant amount of autonomy with little supervision prior to coming to the home. Interestingly, these youth reported that their autonomy became a context for harmful engagement and that their leisure choices played a particularly important role in their move to the home. Due to the extreme cases that precipitated their placement at the home, it could be suggested that the youth require more supervision during their free time. Using leisure as a context for risk taking is consistent with the work of Caldwell and Smith (2006) who suggest that a finite balance exists between too much and too little autonomy. Moreover, they found that when youth are provided with too much autonomy, they might fill their time with risky activities and develop risk-taking identities. Conversely, if young adults are presented with too little autonomy they may not have the opportunity to develop personally meaningful identities.

All of the youth spoke in varying degrees about how their time at the home is controlled by the staff and schedule. For example, a typical day involves attending regularly scheduled groups, therapy appointments, quiet time, lawyer appointments, case meetings, school, and so on. Consequently, free time is at a premium. The home has scheduled hours for free time where the youth can engage in activities at their own discretion; however, they must remain on the property of the home. As such, having free time does not necessitate free choice as the youth conveyed that their free time was still scheduled and controlled by the home. Despite this, many of the youth portrayed how

they are able to intrinsically pursue leisure activities like drawing, playing computer games, puzzle making, reading, playing cards, sports, and watching television. Although free time is fleeting, these moments yields the potential to provide a meaningful space for the youth to pursue leisure that is reflective of the unique aspects of themselves.

The free time context may be one of the only spaces at the home where the youth can engage in individualized activities. Several youth conveyed that their leisure at the home is typically group based and under the direct supervision of a staff member. The uniformity of leisure at the home may have implications for identity as it may suppress the potentialities of leisure to contribute to individuation and the development of a unique personal identity. Turner et al. (1987) found that that highly enmeshed groups may result in depersonalization, which “involves the perception of similarity between oneself and the in-group” (Wyer, 2010, pp. 453-454). The uniformity of the home may contribute to the youth becoming less unique and more like the group. Furthermore, due to the frequency of group activities the youth may be less likely to individuate in leisure when considering the depersonalizing effects of programmed leisure.

Limiting leisure engagements to activities available at the home or prescribed by the staff may negate its identity development potentials. The youth indicated that they did not have much control over their leisure at the home, nor did they have many opportunities for intrinsic self-exploration. Duerden et al. (2009) and Kuentzel (2000) found that leisure provides an optimal context for identity development because it allows individuals to explore different identities in light of the leisure they choose. Duerden et al. (2009) found that, “recreation contexts are important for adolescents because they create opportunities for intrinsic exploration of identity elements such as roles, beliefs, values,

and so on” (p. 334). Due to the youths’ lack of autonomy in leisure their ability to engage in intrinsic self-expression may be compromised. Kuentzel (2000) reports, “the non-obligatory nature of leisure provides a distinctive life-space in which people can either cultivate preferred self-definitions, or creatively elaborate new self-definitions in the face of change” (p. 87). Haggard and Williams (1992) corroborate and state, “freely performed behaviours, such as leisure activities, influence one’s self-perceptions more than constrained behaviors” (p. 3). Given the controlled nature of leisure in a residential care context, it could be suggested that the youth may not experience leisure as something freely chosen. Furthermore, the relationships between living in residential care, leisure, and identity development may not mirror what Kuentzel (2000), Duerden et al. (2009) and Haggard and Williams (1992) proposed.

The youths’ unique experiences in residential care add a layer of complexity to understanding leisure. They spoke about how leisure in a residential care context negates many of the traditional ways of defining leisure. The youth described the home as autonomy suppressing and conveyed how they lost the ability to freely choose their leisure. Moreover, they indicated that the ways in which they exercised their autonomy prior to coming to the home put themselves and their communities in harms way. This presents a unique dilemma when considering the leisure experiences of the youth in this study. The youth demonstrated how their autonomy prior to coming to the home resulted in destructive and precarious engagements; however, the literature suggests that autonomy is a fundamental prerequisite for healthy adolescent development. Consideration needs to be given to better understand the appropriate degree of autonomy

that will promote youth development and limit extreme risk taking. Thus, although controlling the free time context mitigates risk taking it also limits identity exploration.

Violence

The youth unanimously spoke about how living at the home was like living in a culture of violence where they were often attacked verbally and physically for being different. Many of the youth described how the violence at the home was inadequately addressed and that they cycled through being the bully and victim rather inconsequentially. The cyclic nature of violence can be connected to the work of Preyde et al. (2011) who found that the residential care context might provide a space for deviance training. Preyde et al. (2011) discovered that youth who are frequently exposed to environments with deviant norms and values are at greater risk for internalizing deviant ideologies. This can be connected to the experiences of the youth in this study as they all described the home as being violent in nature. The connection between group norms and individual behaviour is explained in the findings of Duffy and Nesdale (2008) who state, “children [youth] belonging to groups with a norm of bullying were more likely to be involved in bullying than were those who belonged to groups that did not have a bullying norm” (p. 134). Thus, it could be suggested that the youth in this study cycled through the roles of bully and victim because it was a part of the norms of the home.

Bullying can also be examined through the lens of SCT, as the bullying could be a product of in-group comparisons (Turner et al., 1987). Turner et al. (1987) found that in-groups often engage in social comparisons, which leads to tensions and discrimination between group members. Many of the youth in the study commented on how they were often bullied and excluded for their differences and this is consistent with the theory.

Hogg (2004) found that when in-groups engage in social comparisons it results in group hegemony and the creation of peripheral or deviant members of the group. This theory may provide insight into the bullying at the home and why the youth were targeted for their differences.

Social comparisons also occurred in the free time context as the youth shared stories about comparing their leisure interests and skills and how these comparisons evolved into larger altercations. Several youth declared that leisure experiences provide an ideal context to express their anger and aggression. This finding is consistent with McKanna (2002) who found that leisure might provide people with enclaves of violence. This is also in line with the findings of Moesch, Birrer, and Seiler (2010) who found that the sport context can trigger violent tendencies, especially when it involves outperformance and social comparisons. Moesch et al. (2010) concluded that youth who do not have strong and positive relationships with adults and also feel socially rejected are likely to use sport as a context for violence. The characteristics outlined by Moesch and colleagues (2010) reflect many of the characteristics of the youth in this study. Thus, it could be suggested that the youth in this study are predisposed to expressing violence in sport.

The youths' experiences with violence are largely congruent with the literature. Research suggests that exposure to violence and bullying can be internalized and integrated into an individual's belief system (Duffy & Nesdale, 2008; Preyde et al., 2011). However, little research has explored the direct relationship between group norms and leisure and this research may add new insights to this discourse. Several youth described how the home is fraught with violence and that the violence often spilled over into their

free time activities. Leisure became another space where the youth could act on their aggression while at the home. This may suggest that group norms play a role in shaping the leisure experience in congregate living. It is not clear if the youth in this study used leisure as a tolerable space to express their aggression prior to coming to the home or if their move prompted them to use leisure violently. Despite this, it could be suggested that a relationship exists between group norms and leisure experiences.

Stigmatization

All of the youth described how their experiences living in residential care were riddled with moments of stigma and discrimination. Many of the youth described how their identity as a youth in care created tensions in their social relationships and that they experienced public discrimination. The youth portrayed how their time in public spaces caused them to feel different and ‘othered’ by their peers and adults in the community. This is consistent with the findings of Gallagher and Green (2012) who report that youth living in out-of-home care have a “profound sense of feeling ‘different’ from other children” (p. 444). The youth in this study conveyed how their identity as a youth in care, at times, superseded their other identities. For example, some youth described how their experiences in sport and organized activities altered when their peers and adult leaders found out they were living at the home. Many of the youth made a conscious effort to conceal their identity by altering their level of disclosure and requesting for the same person to transport them to and from public events. This finding is shared with Gallagher and Green (2012) who found that youth “tried to conceal the fact they were looked after” (p. 444) and that the youth encountered varying degrees of public stigma that impacted their self-concept. For example, many of the youth felt ‘othered’ by their peers because

they were living in residential care and engaged in a negative internal dialogue that focused on their faults and differences.

The youth also portrayed how their experiences with stigma are twofold as they are publically stigmatized and also self-stigmatize. When commenting on their self-stigma, many of the youth reported that living at the home prompted a unique internal dialogue that focused on their faults and needs for improvement. Vogel, Bitman, Hammer, and Wade (2013) explored the impact of stigma on a group of mental health consumers and found that they experienced both public and self-stigma. Their study discovered that the two types of stigma are interconnected and that public stigma can cause individuals to self-stigmatize. Vogel et al. (2013) capture this in the following statement “negative external perceptions such as public stigmatization can have a harmful impact on a person’s internal sense of self” (p. 312). It is not clear if the youths’ experiences with self-stigma were motivated by their encounters with the larger community or if their stigma occurred in isolation of one another. More importantly, given the varying degrees of stigma that the youth faced it could be suggested that this may impact their self-concept.

Other research has identified a connection between social rejection and enhanced group membership. Knowles and Gardner (2008) found that individuals actively seek out social bonds after experiencing social rejection and that rejected individuals are more likely to inflate the meanings they attribute to their group memberships. Based on the findings of Knowles and Gardner (2008) it could be suggested that the stigma and rejection experienced by the youth in this study may have prompted them to develop closer bonds with one another. However, the youth also expressed how their membership

as a youth in care was a common source of tension and stigma. Consequently, many of the youth spoke about making a concerted effort to conceal their identity as a youth in care. It could be suggested that since the stigma was directed toward living in residential care the youth did not inflate the meanings they attributed to that particular social category. Rather than inflating their identity as a youth in care they took significant strides to deflate that particular identity by concealing it from others. This conflicts with Zaff and Hair (2003) who found that marginalized groups often unite in the face of their differences and develop strong social identities around their membership in a marginalized group.

Unexpectedly, many of the youth identified with peripheral group (i.e., past leisure activities) over their prevalent group (i.e., living in residential). These tales of stigma provide insight into this unexpected finding. Many of the youth described having strong affiliations with groups or activities that were no longer a part of their daily lives. For example, some identified with the sports they no longer played or the activities they no longer pursued (i.e., blogging, scooter). Interestingly, many of the youth inflated the meanings and experiences they associated with former activities and used these activities as a source of identification. It could be postulated that being stigmatized for living in residential care prompted many youth to inflate their identities in other peripheral groups, like former leisure activities. Furthermore, it could be suggested that leisure engagements provide a buffer against over identifying with the categorical group as a youth in care. This finding has significant implications for the importance of leisure for youth in out-of-home care and the pervasiveness of a leisure identity.

Conclusion

The experience of living in a residential care context is rife with dialectical tensions that impact identity development and leisure. The youth in this study shared stories about the complexities of living in residential care and the multiple negotiations they faced. Some of the tensions described by the youth included negotiating freedom with safety, group identity with individuality, novelty with consistency, and privacy with social connectedness.

The dialectical nature of living in residential care complicated many of the traditional ways of understanding leisure. The youth described how their leisure was not freely chosen, it was not intrinsically motivated, nor was it always enjoyable. As such, the implicit qualities of the residential care experience negated many of the traditional conceptualizations of leisure. Although the home impinged on the youths' ability to select leisure intrinsically they acknowledged that having complete freedom in leisure might put them at risk for harmful engagement. As a result, the youth were unable to freely choose their leisure to inform their developing identities; however, they were also unable to use leisure in ways that harmed themselves and the larger community.

Living in residential care problematized many of the traditional pathways to identity. Several youth conveyed that the home played an important role in managing their daily experiences, which influenced their identities. Leisure at the home was often programmed and group-based and many of the youth commented on their struggles to express their individuality. Furthermore, the youth did not report having many social connections or valued activities outside of the home and this made them vulnerable to developing a master identity as a youth in care. The youth clearly faced unique

complexities while navigating their identities in a residential care context as they struggled to find a balance between individuality and group identity.

Living at the home also caused the youth to consider their needs for novelty and consistency. Many described the value of leisure in providing them with opportunities for novelty that break up the daily rhythms at the home. Furthermore, research also stresses the importance for self-exploration and novelty during adolescent development (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980; Soenens et al., 2011). Conversely, many of the youth also placed particular importance on maintaining past leisure activities in light of their current situation. The youth alluded to how maintaining engagement in valued activities may be a potential gateway to experience permanency and consistency while living in out-of-home care. Thus, the role of leisure is twofold; it presents youth with opportunities for self-exploration and self-sameness, both of which serve essential identity development functions.

Living at the home dissolved many of the youths' connections with the greater community and consequently left them feeling segregated and isolated. All of the youth expressed having a desire to be connected to the important people in their lives and how living at the home made it difficult to stay connected with others. Interestingly, the desire for social connectedness often conflicted with the youths' desire to remain anonymous while living at the home. Several of the youth conveyed that they made a conscious effort to hide the fact that they were living at the home and described how this impacted their relationships with others. Thus, although the youth yearned to be connected they also described being resistant to disclosing personal information necessary to be connected.

In summary, the intersection between living in residential care, leisure

engagement, and identity development is complex. Despite the complexities of this relationship, it is clear that the residential care context plays an influential role in managing the daily lives of the youth. The youth shared stories about the unique tensions they faced while living at the home and how these tensions intersected with their leisure and identity. The findings from this study may have significant implications for future research and practice.

Implications

This study delved into the lives of a group of youth living in a residential care facility. There are numerous implications stemming from this research but the most important to me is that it contributed positively to the lives of the youth involved. I believe this study provided a valued space for the youth to share their thoughts, opinions, and insights about living in residential care with a larger audience. It is my hope that this research empowered the youth participants and allowed them to feel like valued and contributing members of the research process. Beyond this, the findings from the study have additional implications and for future practice and research.

Implications for Practice

The youth shared several stories about life at the home and unveiled new insights that may contribute to future directions for practice, staff training, and policy reform. It is clear that a greater sensitivity to the impact of violence and harm is needed at the home. Attention should be directed toward developing strategies that create a sense of community that is more positive than in-group differentiation. This may lead to important implications for staff training that focus on respecting diversity, violence and bullying prevention, and positive language. Furthermore, the youth identified a need for new disciplinary and surveillance procedures that better address the bullying at the home. These new procedures could include more severe consequences for bullying, the installation of security cameras, policies that require at least one staff with the youth at all times, and including bullying prevention programs in the curriculum at the home. In light

of these suggestions, it may be important to develop individualized disciplinary procedures to ensure that the youth are not punished for the actions of their peers.

Furthermore, the home may benefit from a greater awareness of the value of recreation for youth living in out-of-home care. This can be achieved by hiring a recreation therapist or by training staff about the importance of recreation for youth in care. Given that some of the youth disclosed that their free time choices played a role in placing them at the home, it might be necessary to include programs that teach leisure specific skills in the curriculum. Other considerations might include creating opportunities for choice and independence while balancing the safety of the youth and greater community; balancing the opportunities for individuating and depersonalizing in leisure; and creating opportunities to maintain old leisure activities while developing new leisure interests. Additionally, staff may want to be sensitized to the importance of leisure during adolescent development and incorporate this understanding in the practices at the home.

In addition to this, a greater awareness of the therapeutic value of leisure could benefit youth living in out-of-home care. Practitioners may want to consider using leisure purposefully to achieve certain outcomes and to assist youth with managing the complexities of the out-of-home care experience. Moreover, practitioners can begin to consider leisure as a potential pathway to permanence and facilitate meaningful leisure experiences that provide youth with a connection to their past, present, and future. Furthermore, recreation can be used purposefully to connect youth with the greater community and provide them with valued roles and identities.

It would be beneficial to develop ‘positive policies’ that focus on facilitating positive leisure involvement as opposed to controlling or eliminating harmful leisure. Jackson (2010) found that recreation and leisure is an important aspect of adolescent development and a largely overlooked area in child welfare policy. As such, attention should be directed toward reviewing old policies and developing new policies in order to foster positive leisure engagement. For example, policies can address the provision of leisure that facilitates social connectedness, identity exploration, and youth empowerment. Policies should also be developed in a manner that reflects the unique developmental needs of the youth. Many of the youth claimed that having one-size fits all policies did not respect their individuality and development. As such, altering certain policies to support the different development needs of the youth may be an important next step for future policy decisions.

Lastly, working collaboratively with the youth, their families, and greater community is an important next step for service delivery. Given that all of the youth are expected to return to their families after treatment, greater attention should be directed to facilitating better community connections. Staff should focus on discharge planning and strive to connect the youth with meaningful supports in the community that will ease their transition back to community living. Furthermore, teaching about the importance of meaningful and shared family leisure activities may be an important consideration for practice. Practitioners should work with families to develop positive leisure practices that buffer the transition from institutional living to family living. Thus, the aftercare experience is an important consideration when working with youth living in out-of-home

care and particular attention should be directed toward facilitating community reintegration and family cohesion.

Implications for Research

This study leaves us with a number of future research directions. As with most research, this study has a few limitations that could guide future programs of study. This investigation explored the perspectives of a small number of youth living in one residential care facility, which is a limitation. Engaging more youth from a variety of facilities in a similar study may provide additional insights untapped by this research. Future research may also want to engage youth along with staff members and family members in the research process to depict a fuller picture of the residential care experience.

There is a need for future research to delve deeper into the lives of youth living in out-of-home care and explore the unique position of leisure within these contexts. Future studies should employ qualitative approaches that position youth participants as active agents in the research process and acknowledge their expertise in their own lived experience (Greene & Hill, 2005). This can be achieved through employing participatory action research methods and other emancipatory research techniques when engaging youth in the research process. Additional research could explore the efficacy of leisure-based interventions for youth living in out-of-home care or the role of leisure in transitioning from out-of-home care to the community. Other research directions might explore leisure as a pathway to permanency, the qualities of residential care that give rise to violence and in-group sorting, or explore deeper the intersection between living in residential care and stigma.

Before engaging in this type of research, future researchers should be aware of the complexities of doing research with youth involved with child welfare, particularly those living in out-of-home care. Researching with youth in child welfare can be cumbersome and I will share a few potential considerations that stem from my experiences with this study. First, Graham and Fitzgerald (2010) report that strong protectionist discourses exist in child welfare that insulates youth living in out-of-home care from the general public. This can be especially problematic for researchers interested in this type of inquiry as gaining access may involve several barriers that may take several months to overcome. In terms of my experience with this study, I was required to be approved by three separate REBs and it took several months before I was permitted to speak with the youth.

Furthermore, just as entry requires thought, special consideration must be directed toward exiting the research process with grace. Research suggests that youth living in out-of-home care typically incur multiple disrupted relationships with adults and this leaves them vulnerable to attachment disorders (Lenz-Rashid, 2009; Samuels, 2009; Sanchez, 2004; Semanchin Jones & LaLiberte, 2013). It is imperative that future researchers consider the unique relational needs of youth living in out-of-home care and take special consideration when ending the research relationship. As such, it would be advantageous for future researchers to develop an exit strategy that is respectful of the youths' dignity and relational needs prior to engaging in the research process. In terms of my experience, I used the tapering method where I slowly reduced the amount of time I was on site, meanwhile informing the youth of my progressive exit.

Other considerations when researching with youth in out-of-home care involve risks to the researcher. Kufeldt, Este, McKenzi, and Wharf (2003) found high rates of racism, homophobia, and sexism in out-of-home care and classified these issues as critical issues in child welfare research and practice. The homophobia, racism, and sexism implicit in out-of-home care may have implications for the researcher and the research process. Researchers inquiring into the out-of-home care experience who are members of minority groups may encounter resistance and discrimination during field work and this may complicate rapport building. Furthermore, certain privileges that the researcher embodies may contribute to bias and conflict between the adult researcher and youth participant (Greene & Hill, 2005). Consequentially, critical reflexivity is required when researching with youth in child welfare and the researcher should make a concentrated effort to shed light onto his or her own positionality throughout the process (Trussell, 2008; 2010).

Finally, additional thought should be given to how the researcher will manage the multiple relationships that will be formed throughout the research process. Trussell (2008) states “the research relationship often becomes a dynamic triad with multiple relationships formed between the researcher, the youth and the youth’s parent(s) or guardian(s)” (p. 167). This relationship places the researcher at the center of negotiations where the youth’s right to a voice is balanced with the guardian’s responsibility to protect his or her child (Greene & Hill, 2005; Trussell, 2008). Interestingly, the research relationships in child welfare becomes a complex web of interactions that involves the youth, their guardians, social workers, youth care workers, and so on. Researchers should consider how they would manage this web of interaction prior to conducting research.

Postscript

The research process is riddled with ethical and moral dilemmas and my experiences with this study exposed me to multiple dilemmas that I was expected to negotiate. The purpose of the postscript is to outline some of the common issues that I faced during the investigation. This section will begin with a poignant narrative that describes my lived experiences prior to embarking on this study and how my experiences prompted my interest in this type of inquiry. After sharing my story, I will present a few of the dilemmas that I encountered during the study which are based on my field logs and reflexive journaling.

Austin's Portrait

I am by no means an experienced youth living in out-of-home care, nor have I endured the traumatic events that the youth in this study encountered. I am, however, an ally and someone who is passionate about empowering young adults. My coming of age story is vastly different from the stories shared by the youth in this study. Moreover, the lens in which I approach and understand adolescence is informed by my unique adolescent experiences. This portrait presents a confessional tale of my lived experiences and how they intersect with the interests of this study.

I spent my early years growing up in a small yet expanding suburb on the Canadian east coast. My father had a secure job and his income was enough to afford my sister and me with the privilege of having my mother stay at home and raise us. As such, I had two parents who invested significantly in me and relinquished many of their dreams in order to provide me with a childhood that was better than their own. My privileges extend beyond having a loving family as I grew up in a middle class household, I am

white, I did not encounter trauma in my early life, and I grew up in a safe and supportive community. This presents a reality that is vastly different from what was shared by the youth in this study. I did not grow up in a broken home, my family did not struggle financially, and I never felt unloved or uncared for. Thus, I acknowledge that my coming of age is somewhat idealistic and that many are not privileged with a similar life story. These differences have inevitably confounded my understanding of the experiences of the youth in this study. Consequently, I was required to rely heavily on them to help me make sense of their experiences living in out-of-home care.

Although I grew up with many privileges, my adolescent years also involved hardship. During my youth, I struggled with mental illness and spent over six months living in a psychiatric facility where I received treatment for my mental illness. It was during this brief moment in my life that I endured, firsthand, the realities of institutional living and the impact of living in a secured facility. My time living at the hospital was both frightening and disempowering. My caregivers shifted away from my parents who loved me to professionals who did not know me; I lost connections with friends; I did not have a say in the daily routine; and I struggled to find an identity outside of my illness. These experiences gave rise to my passion for supporting youth in similar situations because I experienced firsthand the injustices that youth living in institutionalized contexts endure.

After living in the hospital, I reintegrated into my old community and moved back in with my family. I enrolled in a new school where I did not know anyone and did not have to explain my past. After high school, I was accepted to university and enrolled in a professional program where I could act on my passion for supporting youth development.

While at university, I worked as a recreation support worker for an in-patient adolescent mental health unit. Additionally, I worked as a youth care worker for a large residential care facility for youth in child welfare. It was during this time that I experienced what it was like to be a service recipient and also a service provider. My experiences working with institutionalized youth shed light onto the policies and practices that worked and did not work. I became acutely aware of the many hardships that these youth faced, some of which were bestowed upon them by the same system that was supposed to support them. With these new insights, I felt it necessary to continue my education where I could use research as a platform to combat some of the injustices that affect institutionalized youth.

In summary, my positionality and early life experiences have played a crucial role in motivating me to pursue this line of research. Although my passion is rooted in my own experiences, I recognize that these are not shared experiences and that they may impact the research process. In order to manage my biases, I remained sensitized to my unique life encounters throughout the research process and paid particular attention to how my experiences shaped my interactions with the youth. I further managed these subjectivities by constantly questioning my assumptions and recording them in my reflexive journal. Additionally, I spent time debriefing with my research committee; I talked about my assumptions with the youth; and I considered the multiple possibilities that could underlie their experiences. Thus, my life experiences and personal assumptions about adolescence were some of several dilemmas that I faced during the investigation. The remaining section will explore additional problems that I encountered during the research process.

Research Dilemmas

The dilemmas included in this section were determined based on an analysis of my field logs and reflexive journal. I selected four principal dilemmas that were frequently recorded in my journal that I have identified as gaining access, negotiating multiple roles, managing staff and youth interactions, and ending the research relationship. The dilemmas will be presented in a narrative fashion using my field entries and personal reflections as guides for the discussion. Although this section depicts a negative image of the home, I want to acknowledge that there were occasions when the staff were supportive of the youth. However, these positive experiences did not present me with ethical dilemmas and consequently are not included in this section.

November 7, 2012 – Welcome to the home

I finally arrive at the home, a newly renovated bungalow with three sets of potted plants that guide my walk from the driveway to the front door. I take a moment to survey the home – it looks like any typical family dwelling; you would never assume that it is a residential treatment program for youth. I ring the doorbell and wait for what seems like an eternity. I take a deep breath, my nerves are finally starting to hit me, I have no clue what to expect.

This excerpt from my field log captures my initial encounter with the study site. I do not think anything could have prepared me for some of the ethical issues that I was about to face. Although I was physically present at the home, I was a world away from beginning data collection. Gaining access to the youth was the first dilemma that I encountered during the research process. The following field log describes my experience using a middleman to navigate the multiple research relationships.

January 10, 2013 – Waiting on the middleman

It is now almost mid-January and I have not been granted permission to interview the youth. I am beginning to realize why there is so little research exploring the experiences of youth living in out-of-home care – they are very inaccessible. The obstacles that I have been presented with are causing me to question if this study

is feasible at a master's level. Time is running out and although I am passionate about the cause, I am not sure if this type of research is something I will pursue in the future. It seems that tenacity and patience are necessary skills when engaging in this type of research. I am beginning to regret my decision to use a middleman to connect me with the various agencies involved with this project. I assumed that relying on someone who had established connections with the agencies involved with the study would be advantageous. I guess I did not consider that a middleman might not be as invested as I am and that he might not advocate on my behalf. I focused so much on his connections that I failed to consider if they were good connections – perhaps this is what is taking so long. This waiting game is making me anxious; I feel powerless and would rather be making the connections myself.

Gaining access to the youth in this study was especially difficult and this is in line with the literature (see Gallagher & Green, 2012). At the beginning of the study, I felt it would be beneficial to rely on someone who had previously established connections with important decision makers. I believed that using a middleman would help expedite the research process and assist me with navigating the multiple research relationships in child welfare. I quickly realized that the middleman did not share my investment and interest in the study and that he inevitably delayed my access to the youth. The middleman rarely returned my phone calls; he refused to invite me to scheduled research meeting; and my encounters with him were riddled with lies and inconsistencies. The consequence was a six-month wait before I was granted permission to speak with the youth. In addition to my struggles with the middleman, my difficulties gaining access were further problematized by the ethicality of researchers before me. The following excerpt captures the impact of past research programs on the future researchers.

January 12, 2013 – Painted with the same brush

I have finally heard from my middleman; it has been a month since he last returned my calls. He informed me that the agencies have developed new policies pertaining to research that are more stringent and selective of who can conduct research with the youth in their organizations. The reason for these new policies is because of a recent research partnership that was unethical and placed the youth and organizations in jeopardy. I assured the middleman of my ethicality but

my opinions mean little to him. I am in awe of the ripple effect of unethical research and how one researcher's negligence becomes my problem. Although I have not done anything to suggest that I will conduct myself unethically, I am considered a universal researcher and consequently cannot be trusted. As a result, my ethics application is being reviewed at all levels of management.

The above log captures the interconnectedness of past, present, and future researchers as my access to the youth in this study was stifled by the negligence of researchers before me. As a result, I was expected to advocate on my behalf and stress the importance of giving a voice to the youth in the research process.

During the interim of waiting to receive ethical clearance, I spent time observing the youth at the home. During this time, I acted as a participant observer where I participated in the daily activities with the youth and staff. I began to notice that the more time I spent at the home the more confused my roles became. Given my work experience in residential care, some staff relied on me as an additional member of the floor compliment. They would use me to cover their breaks, ask me to supervise computer time, and request that I assist with the therapeutic programming. This created confusion with the youth and muddled my role at the home. Some youth questioned my role and were unsure if I was a researcher, staff member, volunteer, or friend. As a result, I was required to periodically check in with the youth to assure them that I was not a staff member, but a researcher. I too struggled to find my footing at the home and the following excerpt captures my role confusion.

January 31, 2013 – The friendly nature of qualitative research

I am beginning to develop close relationships with the youth. I feel that researching leisure, and participating in leisure activities, has led to our budding relationships. I spend my time at the home playing cards, videogames, basketball, and tag in the backyard and I feel the youth are beginning to see me as a friend and confident – I hope they do not feel I am being deceptive. I worry that my role as a researcher is blurred by the friendly nature of the activities we participate in. I am not sure where I stand with the youth and if they see me as a researcher,

friend, staff, student, or volunteer. I need to be transparent and make sure that they know my role...but what if this changes things.

I also struggled to determine my role in addressing the bullying and violence at the home and the following log captures this difficulty.

February 4, 2013 – These kids can't do better

Today, Shawn asked me if I would play a board game with him and he brought me the anger management game that was sitting, unopened, on a shelf. I agree to play with him and Shawn excitedly removed the plastic rapping from the board game. Mid-way through the game, Nat asked if he could join and Shawn refused to allow him to participate. I found myself trying to manage our relationships so that we could all feel included. This is another moment of confusion, am I a friend? A disciplinarian? A mentor? What is my role in creating a safe culture at the home? I was able to reason with Shawn and we included Nat in the game. Nat's presence brought tensions between him and Shawn and I had to act as a mediator between the two. Again, I found myself questioning my role as a researcher and if it was appropriate for me to intervene. The altercation between Nat and Shawn left me feeling anxious and worried that the fighting might escalate into something physical. I quickly decided to redirect the two and encourage them to make better choices and to be kind to one another. The fighting continued until we decided to end the game. After the game was over, a part-time staff member informed me that she overheard me intervening in Nat and Shawn's argument. The staff person stated, "I heard you encourage the youth to make better choices and you have to realize, these kids can't do better."

The above sentiment describes my challenges managing the multiple roles during qualitative fieldwork. I acknowledge that as a researcher I am required to protect the participants but I am not sure if my oath to protect includes the altercations I witness during fieldwork. The implications of me intervening in the fights might be substantial. Intervening may cause some staff to question my position at the home and potentially destroy the relationships I have with the youth. I did not want the youth to see me as a disciplinarian, but I also did not want them to see me as someone who condones violence.

Another dilemma that I faced involves the violence at the home, in particular violent interactions between the youth and staff. I witnessed on several accounts the youth and staff bullying one another and struggled to find my place amongst the bullying.

The following caption describes my reaction to an incident when a staff member bullied one of the youth.

December 12, 2012 – Soccer’s for sissies

The youth seem to really gang up on one another and frequently call each other names and utter threats. The bullying seems to be an accepted part of the culture here as the staff do little to intervene and appear rather distant. During supper today we all sat around the table. The youth ate and a staff member and I sat with them, not eating but talking about the day. The youth spoke about their favourite past times and sports – a seemingly friendly conversation around the dinner table. One youth spoke highly of his athletic prowess and how his soccer skills far supersede the skills of his peers and staff. The staff retaliated in response to his commentary and stated that soccer was gay and that he would never play soccer because it is a gay sport. This prompted a disturbing conversation between the youth targeting one another’s sexuality based on their sport interests. My stomach sank – I did not know what to say. Should I intervene? What if I do intervene – will the youth think I am gay? Will the staff think I am stepping on their toes? I mean it was the staff that started this conversation in the first place.

The above excerpt captures my struggles accepting the violence at the home and my difficulties balancing my duty to protect with my role as a researcher. During my fieldwork, I found myself constantly questioning my role in protecting the youth from the violent discourses of the staff and their peers. I cannot imagine how the youth must feel when the staff call them names because I felt the weight of the staff’s gay comment on my own wellbeing. The staff’s homophobic commentary made me feel unwelcomed at the home and had me worry about my sport interests and how I performed my sexuality. I cannot fathom how these comments interfere with the youths’ wellbeing as it hurt me even with all of my privileges. The following caption describes another encounter between a youth and staff.

February 7, 2013 – YOUR problems are not MY problems

Leah entered the office to ask Robin [full time staff member] if she could use her community time for three and a half hours. Robin questioned if Leah was intending to use her community time to see her boyfriend and Leah agreed. Robin laughed and told Leah not to disclose that she was going to see her boyfriend to the other staff because they would not allow her to use her community time for

that reason. I was shocked to hear that the staff would encourage Leah to be manipulative and deceptive. Chuck [full time staff member] entered the office and commented on Leah's appearance – Leah then asked him if she could use her community time. Chuck ignored her request and continued about his business. After several periodic requests, Chuck agreed to allow Leah to use her community time. After Leah left, Robin asked Chuck if he was aware that Leah was going to visit her boyfriend. Chuck reported that he knew what Leah was up to and that he did not care. He continued to state that he did not care if Leah got pregnant because it is not his problem and shared this sentiment with the other staff and youth. The youth laughed at Chuck's remark and I sat in silence and disbelief – shocked that he would share this information with the youth. Claudette [part time staff member] informed Chuck that Leah's potential pregnancy would be his problem because he is her primary worker. Claudette then left the room unannounced and went upstairs. Chuck shoved a youth out of his way and followed Claudette upstairs.

The final dilemma that I encountered during the investigation was managing how I would end my relationship with the youth. As mentioned, I developed meaningful relationships with many of the youth and the last thing I wanted to do was cause them harm. I quickly became preoccupied with my exit, spending many sleepless nights worrying about how I would end the research relationship. This final excerpt shares some of my anxieties about the minimizing the impact of my absence at the home.

April 2, 2013 – Exiting with grace

I have recently become consumed with how I will end my relationships with the youth now that my data collection is coming to an end. The last thing I want is to be is another adult person who abandons them. I am worried about exiting with grace and I am unsure how to do this – is there ever a graceful exit in research? I have been thinking about tapering down my visits so that I slowly and gradually become less present at the home. I wonder if the youth will even miss me or if they see me as just another transient adult in their lives – I know that I will miss them. I have developed strong relationships with some of the youth and I am not ready to say goodbye, but maybe they are. Perhaps the decision for me to gradually reduce my time at the home is more self-serving than anything else.

The above descriptions outline a few of the many dilemmas that I faced during my research. The study was fraught with multiple ethical and moral dilemmas that I struggled to manage such as gaining access, managing the research relationships,

witnessing harm to the participants, and ending the research relationship. These dilemmas brought with them a breadth of emotions and difficult decisions that I was expected to negotiate. All research involves ethical and moral dilemmas; however, researching with youth living in out-of-home care may bring a unique set of complexities that complicate the research process. As a result, it is important that future researchers interested in this line of inquiry give thoughtful consideration to the many dilemmas that they will inevitable face throughout the research process.

References

- Abrams, D. A. & Hogg, M. A. (2004) Collective identity: Group membership and self-conception. In M. B. Brewer & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *Self and social identity* (pp.147-181). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Allport, F. M. (1924). *Social Psychology*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin.
- Anglin, J. (2011). Making group home care a positive alternative, not the last resort. In K. Kufeldt & B. McKenzie (Eds.), *Child welfare* (2nd ed.) (pp. 215-228). Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Brightbill, C. K. (1960). *The challenge of leisure*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Brown, I., Leveille, S., & Gough, P. (2006). Is permanence necessary for resilience? Advice for policy makers. In R. J. Flynn, P. M. Dudding, & J. G. Barber (Eds.), *Promoting resilience in child welfare* (pp. 94-115). Ottawa, ON: The University of Ottawa Pres.
- Burg, B. L. (2004). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Butler, I., & Williamson, H. (1994). *Children speak: Children, trauma and social work*. Essex: Longman Group.
- Caldwell, L. L., & Baldwin, C. K. (2003). Development of the free time motivation scale for adolescents. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 35(2), 129-131.

- Caldwell, L. L., & Smith, E. A. (2006). Leisure as a context for youth development and delinquency prevention. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 39(3), 398-418.
- Canada Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct For Research Involving Humans*, December 2010.
- Carruthers, C., & Hood, C. D. (2007). Building a life of meaning through therapeutic recreation: The leisure and well-being model, part 1. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 41(4), 276-297.
- Casey, K. J., Reid, R., Trout, A. L., Hurley, K. D., Chmelka, M. B., & Thompson, R (2010). The transition status of youth departing residential care. *Child and Youth Care Reform*, 39(5), 323-340.
- Collins, W. A., Gleason, G., & Sesma, A. (1985). Internalization, autonomy, and relationships: Development during adolescence. In G. Kuczynski (Ed.), *Parenting and children's internalization of values* (pp. 78-102). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Courtney, M. E., & Zinn, A. (2009). Predictors of running away from out-of-home care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 31(12), 1298-1306.
doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2009.06.003
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1981). Leisure and socialization. *Social Forces*, 60(2), 332-340.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2008). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Daining, D., & DePanfilis, C. (2007). Resilience of youth in transition from out-of-home care to adulthood. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 29(9), 1158-1177.
doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2007.04.006
- Davidson, L., Haglund, K. E., Stayner, D. A., Rakfeldt, J., Chinman, M. J., & Tebes, J. K. (2001). "It was just realizing... that life isn't one big horror": A qualitative study of supported socialization. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*.
- deGrazia, S. (1962). *Of time, work, and leisure*. New York, NY: Twentieth Century Fund.
- Deniz, M. E., Kesen, N. F., & Ure, O. (2006). An investigation of trait anger (t-anger) and anger subscales of adolescents living in youth homes. *Education Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 6(1), 153-159.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dey, I. (1993). *Qualitative data analysis: A user-friendly guide for social scientist*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Duerden, M. D., Widmer, M. A., Taniguchi, S. T., & McCoy, K. J. (2009). Adventures in identity development: The impact of adventure recreation on adolescent identity

- development. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 9, 341-594. doi:10.1080/15283480903422806
- Dumazedier, J. (1974). *The sociology of leisure*. New York, NY: Elsevier.
- Duffy, A. L., & Nesdale, D. (2009). Peer groups, social identity, and children's bullying behavior. *Social Development*, 18(1), 121-139.
- Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity youth and crisis*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Farrington, D. P. (1995). The challenge of teenage antisocial behavior. In M. Rutter (Ed.), *Psychosocial disturbances in young people* (pp.83-130). New York, NY: Cambridge Press.
- Finkelstein, N. E. (1991). *Children and youth in limbo: A search for connections*. New York, NY: Praeger Publishing.
- Flynn, R. J., Beaulac, J., & Vinograd, J. (2006). Participation in structured voluntary activities, substance use, and psychological outcomes in out-of-home care. In R. J. Flynn, P. M. Dudding, & J. G. Barber (Eds.), *Promoting resilience in child welfare* (pp. 216-231). Ottawa, ON: The University of Ottawa Press.
- Foreman, A. (2004). Sites of contention: Young people, community and leisure space. In W. Mitchell, R. Bunton, & E. Green (Eds.), *Young people, risk and leisure* (pp. 142-158). New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Forthun, L. F., Montgomery, M. J., & Bell, N. J. (2006). Identity formation in a relational context: A person-centered analysis of troubled youth. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 6(2), 141-167.

- Gallagher, B., & Green, A. (2012). In, out and after care: Young adults' views on their lives, as children, in a therapeutic residential establishment. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34, 437-450.
- Garfat, T., & Fulcher, L. (2008). Characteristics of a child and youth care approach. *Relational Child and Youth Care Practice*, 24(1-2), 7-19.
- Gilbert, N. (2011). A comparative study of child welfare systems: Abstract orientations and concrete results. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34, 532-536.
doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.10.014
- Gillen, K., Guy, A., & Banim, M. (2004). Living in my street: Adolescents' perceptions of health and social risks. In W. Mitchell, R. Bunton, & E. Green (Eds.), *Young people, risk and leisure* (pp. 43-55). New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Gilligan, R. (2004). Promoting resilience in child and family social work: issues for social work practice, education and policy. *Social Work Education: The International Journal*, 23(1), 93-104.
- Gilligan, R. (2008). Promoting resilience in young people in long-term care – the relevance of roles and relationships in the domains of recreation and work. *Journal of Social Work Practice: Psychotherapeutic Approaches in Health, Welfare and the community*, 22(1), 37-50.
- Gilroy, P. (1997). Diaspora and the detours of identity. In K. Woodward (Ed.), *Identity and difference* (pp. 229-343). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Glover, T. D. (2004). The 'community' center and the social construction of citizenship. *Leisure Sciences*. 26, 63-68.

- Glover, T. D., & Parry, D. C. (2004). Friendships developed subsequent to a stressful life event: The interplay of leisure, social capital, and health. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 40(2), 208-230.
- Goodale, T., & Godbey, G. (1988). *The evolution of leisure*. State College, PA: Venture Publishing, Inc.
- Graham, A., & Fitzgerald, R. (2010). Children's participation in research: Some possibilities and constraints in the current Australian research environment, *Journal of Sociology*, 46, 133-147.
- Greene, S., & Hill, M. (2005). Researching children's experience: methods and methodological issues. In S. Greene & D. Hogan (Eds.), *Researching Children's Experiences* (pp. 1-22). Thousands Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Graham, A., & Fitzgerald, R. (2010). Children's participation in research: Some possibilities and constraints in the current Australian research environment. *Journal of Sociology*, 46, 133-147.
- Grolnick, W. S., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1997). Internalization within the family: The self-determination theory perspective. In G. Kuczynski (Ed.), *Parenting and children's internalization of values* (pp. 135-161). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Guba, E. G. (1990). *The paradigm dialog*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Guba, E. G., & Linclon, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Haggard, L. M., & Williams, D. R. (1992). Identity affirmations through leisure activities: Leisure symbols of the self. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 24(1), 1-18.

- Haggerty, K. D. (2002). The politics of statistics: Variations on a theme. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 27(1), 889-105.
- Hamachek, D. E. (1988). Evaluating self-concept and ego development with Erikson's psychosocial framework: A formulation. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 66(8), 354-360.
- Han, E., & Choi, N. (2006). Korean institutionalized adolescents' attributions of success and failure in interpersonal relations and perceived loneliness. *Child Youth Services Review*, 28, 535-547. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2005.06.002
- Hansen, D. M., Larson L. W., & Dworkin, J. B. (2003). What adolescents learn in organized youth activities: A survey of self-reported developmental experiences. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 13(1), 25-55.
- Hardy, K. V., & Laszloffy, T. A. (2005). *Teens who hurt: Clinical interventions to break the cycle of adolescent violence*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Hogg, M. A. (2004). Social categorization, depersonalization, and group behavior. In M. B. Brewer & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *Self and social identity* (pp. 203-231). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Holloway, I., & Wheeler, S. (2010). *Qualitative research in nursing and healthcare*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Hood, C. D. (2003). Women in recovery from alcoholism: The place of leisure. *Leisure Sciences*, 25, 51-79.
- Hood, C. D., & Carruthers, C. (2007). Enhancing leisure experience and developing resources: The leisure and well-being model, part II. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 41(4), 289-325.

- Hornberger, L. B., Zabriskie, R. B., & Freeman, P. (2010). Contributions of family leisure to family functioning among single-parent families. *Leisure Sciences*, 32(2), 143-161.
- Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social identity theory and self-categorization theory: A historical review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2/1, 204-222.
- Husserl, E. (1977). *Cartesian meditation: An introduction to metaphysics*. New York, NY: Humanities Press.
- Hutchinson, S. L., Baldwin, C. K., & Caldwell, L. L. (2003). Differentiating parent practices related to adolescent behavior in the free time context. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 35(4), 369-422.
- Iso-Ahola, S. E. (1979). Basic dimensions of leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 11(1), 28-39.
- Iwasaki, Y. (2007). Leisure and quality of life in an international and multicultural context: What are major pathways linking leisure to quality of life? *Social Indicators Research*, 82, 233-264. doi:10.1007/s11205-006-9032-z
- Jackson, S. (2010). Reconnecting care and education: from the Children Act 1989 to Care Matters. *Journal of Children's Services*, 5(3), 48-60.
- James, S., Montgomery, S. B., Leslie L. K., & Zhang, J. (2009). Sexual risk behaviors among youth in the child welfare system. *Child and Youth Services Review*, 31(9), 990-1000. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2009.04.014
- Johansson, J., Anderson, B., & Hwang, P. (2007). What difference do different settings in residential care make for young people? A comparison of family style homes and institutions in Sweden. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 17, 26-36.

- Jones, L. (2008). Adaption to early adulthood by a sample of youth discharged from a residential education placement. *Child Youth Care Forum*, 37, 241-263.
doi:10.1007/s10566-08-9061-7
- Jones, L., Landsverk, J., & Roberts, A. (2007). A comparison of two caregiving models in providing continuity of care for youth in residential care. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 36(2/3), 99-109.
- Jun, J., & Kyle, G. T. (2012). Gender identity, leisure identity, and leisure participation. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 44(3), 353-378.
- Kaplan, M. (1960). *Leisure in America: a social inquiry*. New York, New York: Wiley.
- Kelly, J. R. (1983). *Leisure identities and interactions*. London, UK: George Allen & Unwin Publishers, Ltd.
- Kelly, J. R. (1990). *Leisure* (2nd Eds.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Kerstetter, D. L., Yarnal, C. K., Son, J. S., Yen, I. Y., & Baker, B. S. (2008). Functional support associated with belonging to the red hat society, a leisure-based social network. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 40(4), 531-555.
- Kivel, B. D. (1998). Adolescent identity formation and leisure contexts: A selective review of the literature. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 69(1), 36-45).
- Kivel, B. D., & Kleiber, D. A. (2000). Leisure in the identity formation of lesbian/gay youth: Personal, but not social. *Leisure Sciences*, 22, 215-232.
- Kleiber, D. A. (1999). *Leisure experience and human development*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Kleiber, D. A., Hutchinson, S. L., & Williams, R. (2002). Leisure as a resource in

transcending negative life events: Self-protection, self-restoration, and personal transformation. *Leisure Sciences*, 24, 219-235.

Kleiber, D. A., Larson, R., Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1986). The experience of leisure in adolescence. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 18(3), 169-176.

Klimstra, T. A., Hale, W. W., Raaijmakers, Q. A. W., Branje, S. J. T., & Meeus, W. H. J. (2010). Identity formation in adolescence: Change or stability? *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 39, 150-162. doi:10.1007/s.10964-009-9401-4

Knowles, M. L., & Gardner, W. L. (2008). Benefits of membership: The activation and amplification of group identities in response to social rejection. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34, 1200-1215. DOI 10.1177/0146167208320062

Koepke, S., & Denissen, J. J. A. (2012). Dynamics of identity development and separation-individuation in parent-child relationships during adolescence and emerging adulthood – a conceptual integration. *Developmental Review*, 32, 67-88.

Kroger, J. (2000). *Identity development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Kuentzel, W. F. (2000). Self-identity, modernity, and the rational actor in leisure research. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32(1), 87-92.

Kufeldt, K., Este, D., McKenzi, B., & Wharf, B. (2003). Critical issues in child welfare. In K. Kufeldt & B. McKenzie (Eds.), *Child welfare connecting research, policy and practice* (pp. 395-429). Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Kufeldt, K., Simard, M., Vachon, J., Baker, J., & Andrews, T. L. (2000). Looking after children in Canada. *Unpublished report. Fredericton, NB: Project associated with University of New Brunswick*.

- Larson, R., & Seepersad, S. (2003). Adolescents' leisure time in the United States: Partying, sports, and the American experiment. *New Directives for Child and Youth Development*, 99, 53-64.
- Legault, L., & Moffat, S. (2006). Positive life experiences that promote resilience in young people in care. In R. J. Flynn, P. M. Dudding, & J. G. Barber (Eds.), *Promoting resilience in child welfare* (pp. 173-191). Ottawa, ON: The University of Ottawa Press.
- Lenz-Rashid, S. T. (2009). Foster Youth's Perspectives.
- Mahoney, J. L., Sattin, H., & Magnusson, D. (2001). Youth recreation center participation and criminal offending: A 20-year longitudinal study of Swedish boys. *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 25(6), 509-520.
- Manson, J. (2008). A children's standpoint: Needs in out-of-home care. *Children and Society*, 22, 358-369. DOI: 10.1111/j.1099-0860.2007.00115.x
- Marcia, J. E. (1980). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson, *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (pp. 109-137). New York, NY: Wiley & Sons.
- Martin, P. Y., & Jackson, S. (2002). Educational success for children in public care: advice from a group of high achievers. *Child and Family Social Work*, 7, 121-130.
- McGinnity, A. (2007). Voice of young people in care: "Don't be so formal, I'm normal" Caspar conference, Belfast, Northern Ireland, January 25, 2007. *Child care practice*, 13(3), 301-310.
- McKanna, C. V. (2004). Enclaves of Violence in Nineteenth-Century California. *Pacific Historical Review*, 73(3), 391-424.

- McNeal, R., Field, M. L., Handwerk, C. E., & Roberts, M. C. (2006). Hope as an outcome variable among youths in a residential care setting. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 76(3), 304-311. doi:10.1037/0002-9432.76.3.304
- Meeus, W. (2011). The study of adolescent identity formation 2000-2010: A review of longitudinal research. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 21(1), 75-94.
- Merriam, S. M. (2002). Introduction to qualitative inquiry. In S. M. Merriam *Qualitative research in practice* (pp. 3-17). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Moerer-Urdahl, T., & Creswell, J. W. (2004). Using transcendental phenomenology to explore the “ripple effect” in a leadership mentoring program. *International Institute for Qualitative Methodology*, 3(2), 19-35.
- Moesch, K., Birrer, D., & Seiler, R. (2010). Differences between violent and non-violent adolescents in terms of sport background and sport-related psychological variables. *European Journal of Sport Science*, 10(5), 319-328.
- Moses, T. (2009). Stigma and Self-Concept Among Adolescents Receiving Mental Health Treatment. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 79(2), 261-274.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Mullis, R. L., Garf, S. C., & Mullins, A. K. (2009). Parental relationships, autonomy, and identity processes of high school students. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 170(4), 326-338.

- National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (Canada), Trocmé, N. M., & Public Health Agency of Canada. (2008). *Canadian Incidence Study of reported child abuse and neglect, 2008: Major findings*. Public Health Agency of Canada.
- Neulinger, J. (1981). *The psychology of leisure*. Springfield, IL: C. C. Thomas.
- Nightingale, E. O., & Wolverton, L. (1993). Adolescent rolelessness in modern society. *Teachers College Record*, 94, 472-187.
- Norman, R. E., Byambaa, M., De, R., Butchart, A., Scott, J., & Vos, T. (2012). The long-term health consequences of child physical abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *PLOS Medicine*, 9(11), e1001349.
- Park, N. (2009). Building strengths of character: Keys to positive youth development. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 18(2), 42-47.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Petersen, A. C., & Leffert, N. (1995). What is special about adolescence? In M. Rutter (Ed.), *Antisocial behavior in young people* (pp.3-36). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Pieper, J. (1963). *Leisure: The basis of culture*. New York, NY: The New American Library.
- Ponterotto, J., G. (2005). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: A primer on research paradigms and philosophy of science. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 126-136.

- Preyde, M., Frensch, K., Cameron, G., White, S., Penny, R., & Lazure, K. (2011). Long-term outcomes of children and youth assessing residential or intensive home-based treatment: Three year follow up. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 20(5), 660-668.
- Rauktis, M. E., Fusco, R. A., Cahalane, H., Bennett I. K., & Rienhart, S. M. (2011). "Try to make it seem like we're regular kids": Youth perceptions of restrictiveness in out-of-home care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33, 1224-1233.
doi:10.1016/j.chidyouth.2011.02.012
- Raymore, L. A., Barber, B. L., Eccles, J. S., & Godbey, G. C. (1999). Leisure behavior pattern stability during the transition from adolescence to young adulthood. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 28(1), 79-103.
- Ringle, J. L., Huefner, J. C., James, S., Pick, R., & Thompson, R. W. (2012). 12-month follow-up for youth departing an integrated residential continuum of care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34, 675-679.
- Roberts, K. (2011). Leisure: The importance of being inconsequential. *Leisure Studies*, 30(1), 5-20.
- Robertson, B. J. (1999). Leisure and family: Perspectives of male adolescents who engage in delinquent activity as leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 31(4), 335-358.
- Robinson, C. (2009). 'Nightscapes and leisure spaces': an ethnographic study of young people's use of free space. *Journal of youth studies*, 12(5), 501-514.
- Rutter, M. (1995). *Antisocial behavior in young people*. New York: NY: Cambridge University Press.

- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68
- Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. (2000) Interpersonal flourishing: A positive health agenda for the new millennium. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4(1), 30-44.
- Sadowski, C. (2004, October, 15). Promoting awareness with purple. *St. Catharines News*. Retrieved from [http://www.facsniagara.on.ca/db_media/CAPM04%20St. %20Catharines%20News.PDF](http://www.facsniagara.on.ca/db_media/CAPM04%20St.%20Catharines%20News.PDF)
- Samuels, G. M. (2009). Ambiguous loss of home: The experience of familial (im)permanence among young adults with foster care backgrounds. *Child and Youth Services Review*, 31(12), 1229-1239.
- Sanchez, R. (2004). *Youth perspectives on permanency*. Los Angeles, CA: California Youth Connection.
- Schumaker, K., Fallon, B., & Trocme, B. (2011). The response of the Ontario child welfare system to neglect: 1993-2003. In K. Kufeldt & B. McKenzie (Eds.), *Child welfare* (2nd ed.) (pp. 37-56). Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Search Institute. (2012). *Discovering what kids need to succeed*. Retrieved from <http://www.search-institute.org/>
- Sechrest, L., & Sidani, S. (1995). Quantitative and qualitative methods: Is there an alternative? *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 18(1), 77-87.

- Semanchin-Jones, A., & LaLiberte, T. (2013). Measuring youth connections: A component of relational permanence for foster youth. *Children and Youth Services Review, 35*, 509-517.
- Service Ontario. (2013). Helping young people in and leaving care. Retrieved from http://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2013/01/help-for-young-people-in-and-leaving-care.html?utm_source=ondemand&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=p
- Sharpe, E. K. (2008). Festivals and social change: Intersections of pleasure and politics at a community music festival. *Leisure Sciences, 30*, 217-234.
- Shaw, S. M. (2000). If our research is relevant, why is nobody listening? *Journal of Leisure Research, 32*(1), 147-151.
- Shaw, S. M. (2001). Conceptualizing resistance: Women's leisure as political practice. *Journal of Leisure Research, 33*(2), 186-201.
- Shaw, S. M., & Dawson, D. (2001). Purposive leisure: Examining parental discourses on family activities. *Journal of Leisure Research, 23*, 217-231.
- Shaw, S. M., Kleiber, D. A., & Caldwell, L. L. (1995). Leisure and identity formation in male and female adolescents: A preliminary examination. *Journal of Leisure Research, 27*(3), 245-263.
- Smith, B. & Sparks, A. C. (2008). Contrasting perspectives on narrating selves and identities: An invitation to dialogue. *Qualitative Research, 8*(1), 5-35.
- Smith, R. B. (2005). Social structural inquiries, part 1, qualitative and quantitative theories. *Quality and Quantity, 39*, 801-825.
- Snyder, G. F. (2012). Multivalent recognition: Between fixity and fluidity in identity politics. *The Journal of Political Science, 74*(1), 249-261.

- Soenens, B., Berzonsky, M. D., Dunkel, C. S., & Papini, D. R. (2011). The role of perceived parental dimensions and identification in late adolescents' identity processing styles. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 11, 189-210. doi:10.1080/15283488.2011.594781
- Sokolowski, R. (2000). *Introduction to Phenomenology*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Statistics Canada (2010). *Residential care facilities*. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/83-237-x/83-237-x2012001-eng.htm>
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Sage.
- Swift, K. J., & Callahan, M. (2009). *At risk: Social justice in child welfare and other human services*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, Inc.
- Tanti, C., Stukas, A. A., Halloran, M. J., & Foddy, M. (2011). Social identity change: Shifts in social identity during adolescence. *Journal of adolescence*, 34(3), 555-567.
- Thorne, S. (2008). *Interpretive description*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Trafimow, D., Triandis, H. C., & Goto, S. G. (2001). Some tests of the distinction between the private self and the collective self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60(5), 649-655.
- Trenberth, L. (2005). The role, nature and purpose of leisure and its contribution to individual development and wellbeing. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 33(1), 1-7.

- Trout, A. L., Chmelka, M. B., Thompson, R. W., Epstein, M. H., Tyler, P., & Pick, R. (2010). The departure status of youth from residential group care: Implications for aftercare. *The Journal of Child and Family Studies, 19*(1), 67-78.
doi:10.1007/s10826-009-9283-9
- Trussell, D. E. (2008). Unique ethical complexities and empowering youth in the research process. *Journal of Parks and Recreation Administration, 26*(2), 163-176.
- Trussell, D. E. (2010). Gazing from the inside out during ethically heightened moments. *Leisure Studies, 29*(4), 337-395.
- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. M., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. New York, NY: Blackwell.
- Turner, J. C., & Reynolds, K. J. (2004). The social identity perspective in intergroup relations: Theories, themes, and controversies. In M. B. Brewer & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *Self and social identity* (pp. 259-277). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2006). *Administration for children and families*. Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cwo03-06/>
- Vazou, S., Ntoumanis, N., & Duda, J. L. (2005). Peer motivational climate in youth sport: A qualitative inquiry. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 6*, 497-516.
- Vitterso, J. (2010). Recreate or create? Leisure as an arena for recovery and change. In R. Biswas-Diener (Ed.), *Positive psychology as social change* (pp.293-308). New York, NY: Springer Science Business Media.

- Vogel, D. L., Bitman, R. L., Hammer, J. H., & Wade, N. G. (2013). Is stigma internalized? The longitudinal impact of public stigma on self-stigma. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 60*(2), 311-316.
- Waterman, A. S. (1999). Identity, the identity statuses, and identity status development: A contemporary statement. *Developmental Review, 19*(4), 591-621.
doi:10.1006/drev.1999.0493
- Watts, C. E., & Caldwell, L. L. (2008). Self-determination and free time activity participation as predictors of initiative. *Journal of Leisure Research, 40*(1), 156-181.
- Whitlock, J. (2007). The role of adults, public space, and power in adolescent community connectedness. *Journal of Community Psychology, 35*(4), 499-518.
- Willis, J. W., Jost, M., & Nilakanta, R. (2007). *Foundations of qualitative research: Interpretive and critical approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Witt, P. A., & Ellis, G. D. (1985). Conceptualizing leisure: Making the abstract concrete. In T. L. Goodale & P. A. Witt (Eds.), *Recreation and leisure: Issues in an era of change* (pp.105-117). State College, PA: Venture Publishing.
- Wolff, R. F. (2002). Self-reflection: An essential quality for phenomenological researchers. In S. M. Merriam (Ed.), *Qualitative research in practice* (pp. 117-120). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Wong, T. M. J., Branje, S. J. T., VanderValk, I. E., Hawk, S. T., & Meeus, W. H. J. (2010). The role of siblings in identity development in adolescence and emerging adulthood. *Journal of Adolescence, 33*(5), 673-682.

- Wyer, N. A. (2010). Selective self-categorization: Meaningful categorization and the in-group persuasion effect. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 150*(5), 452-470.
- Zaff, J. F., & Hair, E. C. (2003). Positive development of the self: Self-concept, self-esteem, and identity. In M. Bornstein, L. Davidson, C. Keyes, & K. Moore *Well-Being* (pp. 235-252). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishing.
- Zegers, M. A. M., Schuengel, C., Van Ijendoorn M. H., & Janssens, J. M. A. M. (2008). Attachment and problem behavior of adolescents during residential treatment. *Attachment and Human Development, 10*(1), 91-103.
- doi:10.1080/14616730701868621

Appendix A: Invitation Letter

**Youth Living in Residential
Care: Implications for Leisure**

Date:

Dear Organization,

My name is Austin Oswald and I am a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and master's student at Brock University. My supervisor, Colleen Hood, PhD, is also a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and has over twenty years experience teaching in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies.

Thank you for your interest in my research project titled: "Youth Living in Residential Care: Implications for Leisure and Identity". This letter seeks a partnership with your organization, as a study site, to explore the daily experiences of youth living in a residential care context.

The purpose of this research is to understand the shared experiences of youth living in residential care. The study is guided by the qualitative method and I am interested in answering the question: "What is the intersection between living in residential care, leisure engagement, and adolescent identity development?"

The participants will be asked to participate in two semi-structured interviews, expected to last between 30 and 60 minutes in length. In addition to this, the youth participants will be asked to complete a brief demographic questionnaire, expected to last approximately five minutes. Lastly, I am also interested in reviewing agency documents (e.g., mission and vision statements, and policy and procedures) as they relate to recreation participation and adolescent identity development.

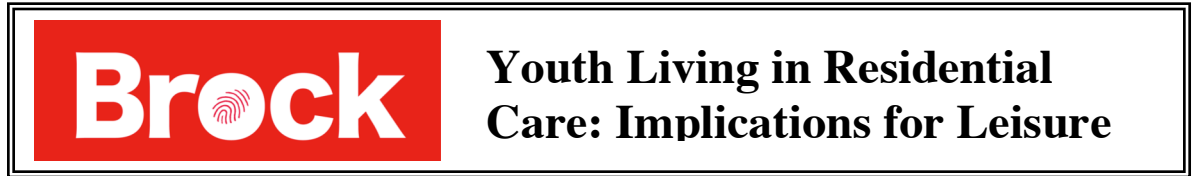
I value the potential partnership with your organization and look forward to collaborating in the future

Sincerely,

Austin Oswald, CTRS
(Principal Student Investigator)

This study has received ethics clearance from Brock University's Research Ethics Board – File Number: 12-003. If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research participant, you may contact Lori Walker, Manager of Brock University's Office of Research Ethics for assistance: (905) 688-5550 ext. 3035 (reb@brocku.ca)

Appendix A: Invitation Letter



Date:

Dear Youth and Guardian,

This is an invitation to participate in a study that involves research. This study is interested in the experiences of youth living in residential care, and how living in residential care impacts leisure and identity development.

Your input is important and appreciated. Participating in this study will include a brief demographic questionnaire, expected to last five minutes. Additionally, you will be asked to participate in two semi-structured interviews, expected to last between 30 and 60 minutes each.

Participating is voluntary and the decision to participate in this study will have no impact on the care you receive at the home. Furthermore, you may withdraw from the study at any time and may do so without any penalty.

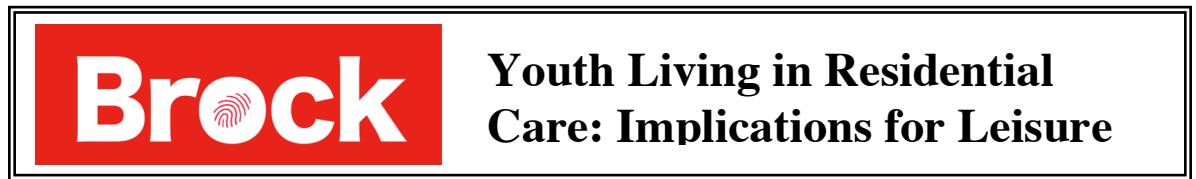
An Information Sheet and Consent Form are attached. Please take the time to read them over. If you are willing to participate, please sign the consent form and return it to Austin Oswald, CTRS.

Sincerely,

Austin Oswald, CTRS - (905) 933-7757 or ao10aq@brocku.ca
(Principal Student Investigator)

This study has received ethics clearance from Brock University's Research Ethics Board – File Number: 12-003. If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research participant, you may contact Lori Walker, Manager of Brock University's Office of Research Ethics for assistance: (905) 688-5550 ext. 3035 (reb@brocku.ca)

Appendix B: Information Sheet

**Information Sheet**

Researcher Austin Oswald, CTRS, MA candidate
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies
Faculty of Applied Health Sciences
Brock University
(905) 933-7757
ao10aq@brocku.ca

Supervisor Colleen Hood, PhD, CTRS,
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies,
Faculty of Applied Health Sciences
Brock University
(905) 688-5550 ext. 5120
chood@brocku.ca

What is this study for? You are invited to participate in a study that involves research. The purpose of this study is to explore the intersection of living in residential care, leisure engagement, and adolescent identity development.

What do the participants do? This study will involve two interviews, expected to last between 30 and 60 minutes. During the interviews, you will be asked to talk about your experiences living in residential care, your leisure interests, and sense of self. The interviews will be audio recorded; however, you have the option to not be recorded. At the beginning of the first interview, you will be asked to complete a brief demographic questionnaire.

Who is the principal investigator? Austin Oswald, MA Leisure Studies, is the principal student investigator. He is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and has five years experience working with youth in institutionalized contexts. Colleen Hood, PhD, will help with the study by providing supervision. Colleen Hood, PhD, is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and has over twenty years experience teaching in the Recreation and Leisure Studies Department.

What about confidentiality/privacy? Any information collected during the study will be stored in a locked cabinet in Colleen Hood's office at Brock University. All electronic data will be secured on Austin Oswald's password protected computer. Any identifying information will not be included in the final reports. At the end of the study, all of the

data collected during this study will be destroyed. However, if you share information about being harmed by others, plans to harm yourself, or plans to harm others it is my responsibility to share that information with your support staff.

What are the results going to be used for? The information you share may be presented at conferences and published in academic journals. An executive summary of the findings will also be given to you and your support staff. Personal identifiers will be striped from any reports resulting from this study.

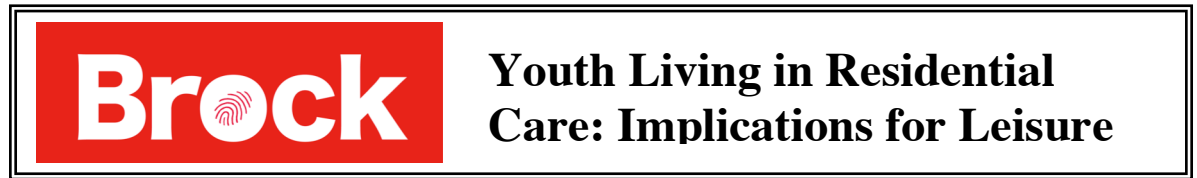
Voluntary participation and withdrawal? Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. Your decision to participate, or not, will have no impact on the care you receive at the home. Furthermore, you may decide to withdrawal from the study at any time and may do so without penalty or loss of benefits that you are entitled.

Are there any risks and benefits? There are no physical risks to participating in this study. However, the interviews will ask you to think about your current living situation, which may be unfavourable. As a result, you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. To help, a list of local supports is available to you if you are in need of additional support.

Honorarium You will receive a \$15.00 gift certificate at the end of the study as a token of my appreciation.

This study has received ethics clearance from Brock University's Research Ethics Board – File Number: 12-003. If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research participant, you may contact Lori Walker, Manager of Brock University's Office of Research Ethics for assistance: (905) 688-5550 ext. 3035 (reb@brocku.ca)

Appendix C: Consent Form

**Parent / Legal Guardian Consent**

I have read the attached Information Sheet and understand the nature of the study, as described in the Information Sheet. I understand that participating in this study will involve two semi-structured interviews and a brief questionnaire. I am aware that the interviews will be audio-recorded and that there is an option to not be recorded. I acknowledge that any information shared during the study will be kept confidential. However, I know that it is the researcher's responsibility to disclose any information shared about being harmed by others, plans for self-harm, or plans to harm others. I am aware that names and identifying characteristics will not be used in any reports, presentations, or publications that use the findings from the study. I understand that participating is completely voluntary and participating or withdrawing from the study will not result in penalty.

I have a copy of the Information Sheet for my own records.

I agree / disagree (circle one) that the interviews will be audio-recorded.

I agree / disagree (circle one) with using my quotes in reports that use the findings from the study.

I consent / I do not consent (circle one) to allow:

_____ to participate in this study.

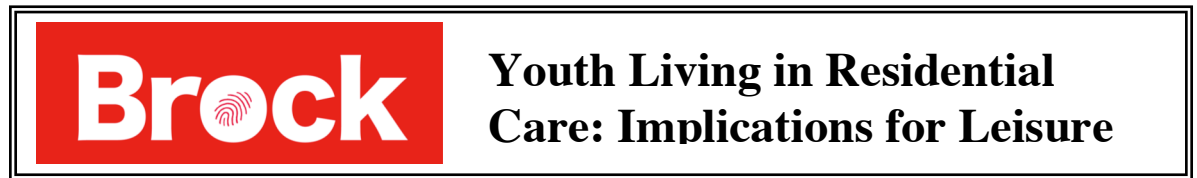
(Please print youth's name)

Signature

Researcher's Signature

Date: _____

Appendix C: Consent Form

**Informed Consent**

I have read the attached Information Sheet and understand the nature of the study and my rights and responsibilities as a participant.

I am aware that participating in the study will include two audio-recorded interviews and a brief demographic questionnaire. I understand that participating in the study is voluntary and my decision to participate or withdrawal will not result in penalty or impact the care I receive at the home. I understand that any information shared during the study will be kept confidential. However, I acknowledge that it is the researcher's responsibility to disclose any information about being harmed by others, plans for self-harm, or plans to harm others.

I have a copy of the *Information Sheet* for my own records.

I agree / disagree that the interviews will be audio-recorded.

I agree / disagree (circle one) with using the information I share as quotes to support the results of the study.

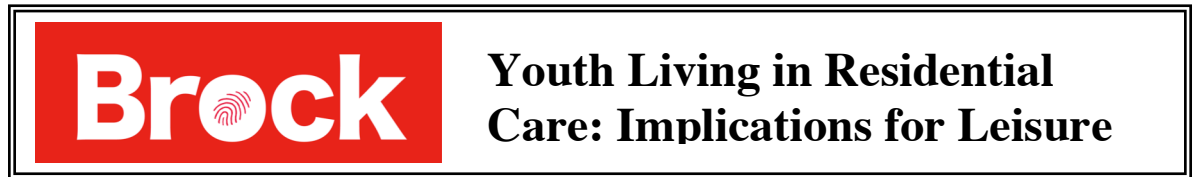
I consent / do not consent (circle one) to participate in this study.

Participant Signature

Signature of Researcher

Date: _____

Appendix D: Information Page

**Information Page**

Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender: Male _____ Female _____ Transgendered _____

How long have you been residing *in this* facility?

Less than 6 months _____ 6-12 months _____ More than 12 months _____

Where did you live before here? _____

For how long: Less than 6 months _____ 6-12 months _____ More than 12 months _____

Are you currently attending school? Yes _____ No _____

If so, what grade are you in? _____

Are you currently working? Yes _____ No _____

If so, where: _____

Approximately how many hours per week: _____

Typically, how much free time do you have each *weekday*?

Less than 1 hour ____ 1-3 hours ____ 4-6 hours ____ More than 7 hours ____

Thinking about your free time, *during the week*, how much of this time is spent at the group home?

Less than 1 hour ____ 1-3 hours ____ 4-6 hours ____ More than 7 hours ____

Thinking about your free time, *during the week*, how much of this time is spent alone?

Less than 1 hour ____ 1-3 hours ____ 4-6 hours ____ More than 7 hours ____

Thinking about your free time, *during the week*, how much of this time is spent with others by choice?

Less than 1 hour ____ 1-3 hours ____ 4-6 hours ____ More than 7 hours ____

Typically, how much free time do you have each *weekend*?

Less than 1 hour ____ 1-3 hours ____ 4-6 hours ____ More than 7 hours ____

Thinking about your free time, *during the weekend*, how much of this time is spent at the group home?

Less than 1 hour ____ 1-3 hours ____ 4-6 hours ____ More than 7 hours ____

Thinking about your free time, *during the weekend*, how much of this time is spent alone?

Less than 1 hour ____ 1-3 hours ____ 4-6 hours ____ More than 7 hours ____

Thinking about your free time, *during the weekend*, how much of this time is spent with others by choice?

Less than 1 hour ____ 1-3 hours ____ 4-6 hours ____ More than 7 hours ____

Do you currently participant in organized recreation? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, what activities? _____

If no, why not? _____

Appendix E: Support Service



Youth Living in Residential Care: Implications for Leisure

Support Services

The following is a list of support services for your use if you feel upset or are in need of additional support. The agencies provided have been informed of this study and are prepared and willing to provide assistance in the event that it is required.

SERVICE NAME AND ADDRESS	CONTACT INFORMATION
Pathstone Mental Health Crisis Services <i>3340 Schmon Parkway, Thorold, ON L2V 4Y6</i>	Phone: 1-800-263-4944 E-mail: office@Pathstone.ca
Mobile Intensive Treatment Team (MITT) <i>3340 Schmon Parkway, Thorold, ON L2V 4Y6</i>	Phone: 1-800-263-0122 E-mail: office@Pathstone.ca
Rainbow Youth Niagara <i>145 Queenston St, Ste 100, St Catharines, ON L2R 2Z9</i>	Phone: 1-905-380-4576 E-mail: svail@questchc.ca
Distress Centre Niagara <i>195 East Main St., Welland, ON L3B 3W7</i>	Phone: 905-688-3711 E-mail: info@distresscentreniagra.com
Kids Help Phone	1-800-668-6868
Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line	1-800-268-9688

Appendix F: Interview Guide for Interview One



Youth Living in Residential Care: Implications for Leisure

To begin, I want you to take a moment and think about the care facility where you live; think about some of your experiences, interactions, and attitudes/feelings you associated with this space. I want the main focus of your attention to be on this specific place and the meanings you associate with it. Now... take a few minutes... as long as you like... and let me know when you feel prepared to share these thoughts with me.

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS: RESIDENTIAL LIVING

1. When you think about the place where you live, what comes to mind?
2. How would you describe this space to someone who knows nothing about it?
3. Can you paint me a picture of all of the things you enjoy about living in residential care?
4. What about the things you don't like?
5. How would you describe the impact that living in residential care has had on you?

SOCIAL NETWORKS: SELF-CATEGORIZATION

ACTIVITY – Leaf

6. How does living in residential care affect the choices you make in free time? The activities you engage in? The people you hang out with?
7. Who is important to you in your life? How is this person important to you?
8. Who is important to you at the home?

IDENTITY: FACTORS INFLUENCING SENSE OF SELF

ACTIVITY – Alphapoeam

9. How would you describe yourself? Anything else? Anything else?
10. How would others describe you?
11. What kind of things do you like to do in your free time?
12. Describe the place of free time engagements in your life?

Appendix F: Interview Guide for Interview Two

**Youth Living in Residential
Care: Implications for Leisure****RESIDENTIAL LIVING: A SNAP SHOT***ACTIVITY – Pie of life*

1. Thinking about the last week what was your **worst** day?
2. Thinking about the last week, what was your **best** day?
3. In what ways was the last week typical or not typical for you?

SOCIAL NETWORKS: SELF-CATEGORIZATION*ACTIVITY – activity over time*

4. How would you say living in residential care affects the way you interact with others both in and outside of the home?
5. Describe your connections to the world outside the home?
6. How would you say living in residential care affects the way others see you and interact with you?

**INTERSECTION: RESIDENTIAL CARE, LEISURE AND
IDENTITY***ACTIVITY – Glass*

7. How would you say living in residential care affects the choices and options you have for free time engagements?

8. How does participating in free time activities affect the way others see you and interact with you?
9. How would you say living in residential care affects the way you see yourself and/or define yourself?
10. What is the role of recreation in your life?
11. Anything else you want to tell me about your experiences living in residential care?